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Functions of Gender in Soca: An Historical and Lyrical Analysis of St. Lucian Soca

Ekeama Sharon Goddard-Scovel
Purdue University

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Alfred J. Lopez
Chair

Shaun F. D. Hughes

Aparijita Sagar

Marlo D. David

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FUNCTIONS OF GENDER IN SOCA: AN HISTORICAL AND LYRICAL ANALYSIS OF ST. LUCIAN SOCA

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ABSTRACT

Goddard-Scovel, Ekeama S. Ph.D., Purdue University, August 2016. Functions of Gender in Soca: An Historical and Lyrical Analysis of St. Lucian Soca. Major Professor: Alfred J. Lopez.

Soca's music history negatively impacts female soca artists, especially when taking into account each island's differing Carnival music history. Contrary to popular assumptions, soca (as well as calypso) did not develop similarly in every Caribbean island. Soca actually exemplifies a pan-Caribbean phenomenon that is regionally as well as gender specific. St. Lucia illustrates this phenomenon as it has a markedly different calypso history from Trinidad, which has long been called the land of calypso, and more recently the land of soca. I use St. Lucia as a departure point from which to dismantle the overarching Trinidadian narrative that many, including St. Lucians, have co-opted in an effort to foster Caribbean unity and global brand recognition. Specifically, I explore the intersections of soca, women, and neoliberalism through an historical analysis of St. Lucian Carnival music history and the songs of three female soca artists. Performing this kind of analysis is especially relevant in a global moment where Trinidad-style Carnival, musicians, and Carnival products are available in most large metropolitan cities. And, although the field of Carnival musics is filled with discussions on calypso and women in calypso, few scholars explore the intersections of soca, women, and neoliberalism, with

the notable exception of Canadian Jocelyne Guilbault. This silence of a scholarly group known for vibrant discussions and analysis of Caribbean life is palpable. Into this silence, I voice an intersectional conversation on soca, a genre that is rapidly becoming the sound and image of what 'being Caribbean' means, even as those images play into problematic stereotypes of the Black Caribbean female that traces its roots to slavery and our colonial past.

In this dissertation, I contextualize critical socio-historical issues inherent in creating a St. Lucian Carnival music industry seeking to emulate Trinidad's global brand of soca (and calypso). The unacknowledged history of St. Lucian Carnival music in the 20th century creates a complication which can only be untangled by acknowledging its impact on St. Lucian soca (and calypso). St. Lucia's French Kwéyòl and English language disputes, as well as their more egalitarian gender power dynamics in popular music forms, made adopting Trinidad's English and "anti-woman" song forms difficult for many St. Lucians. Trinidadian calypso (soca's precursor) was a homosocial space where male calypsonians controlled the heterosexual narratives; and, not surprisingly, women were always culpable while men were blameless. However, Trinidadian style calypso was very popular and lucrative, and so St. Lucia's elites sought to mimic it and its progeny, soca. Consequently, the differing assumptions about the role of women in St. Lucia and Trinidad concerning calypso narratives, as well as whether or not they could sing calypso, created issues soca inherited.

In the 21st century, St. Lucian female soca artists struggle to find a place within this music genre where female soca artists are often relegated to singing about "women's issues" or joining the accepted norms of singing music espousing the "anti-female

sentiment" that is popular in instructive soca songs. And to understand how they got to this point, I first assemble a history of St. Lucian Calypso, which surprisingly relies on the St. Lucia Carnival Queen Show. I then explore the power dynamics of language and gender in St. Lucian calypso, as these eventually informed the sexual politics of soca. Next, I interrogate Carnival songs sung by St. Lucian female soca artists Agnes Lewis (Sobriquet Black Pearl), Nicole David (Sobriquet Nicole "Nicki" David) and Melissa Moses (Sobriquet Q-Pid) to demonstrate how these prominent figures respond to local, regional and global pressures linked to language, gender and finance. Lastly, I examine the Caribbean diaspora's influence on the Caribbean woman's more prominent role in soca's lyrical content, stage and video performances, as well as the Caribbean woman's increasing role as soca singer. Throughout this dissertation, I urge Caribbean identified people into a conversation on the accepted/assumed role of women in Caribbean Carnival music, as well as a long overdue conversation on the varieties of Carnival musics from different countries which make up the One Caribbean.

INTRODUCTION

> Arguably, the Caribbean has always been globally oriented. Its particular history and development, therefore, problematize assumptions about moving in a linear fashion from locally rooted, area studies approach to a global-transnational one.
>
> – Karla Slocum and Deborah A. Thomas

The Caribbean has been a site of commodification for centuries.[1] From Columbus' "discovery" of the New World in 1492, countries of the Global North used the Caribbean to create markets for a variety of products. From goods and services to flora and fauna, and more notably, to human bodies, the Caribbean islands have always been concerned with the export of products to the countries of the Global North.[2] This commodification began with the colonization of the New World by Western European nations starting in 1492, and over 400 years later, although colonies are now nominally "independent" this

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[1]The term "Caribbean" in recent years has been used to refer to islands that make up the archipelago that is made up of the Greater and Lesser Antilles/Leeward and Windward Islands. The term West Indian, is perceived by these Anglophone countries to have links with the colonial era. Therefore, I will only use the term West Indian when speaking of Caribbean islands prior to the mid 20th century after which independence was either won or granted. Here I use Jackson's definition of commodification as referring "literally, to the extension of the commodity form to goods and services that were not previously commodified." See Peter Jackson,"Commodity Cultures: The Traffic in Things." *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 24.1 (1999): 95-108 at 96.. *JSTOR*. Web. 12 Nov. 2012.

[2] For a more comprehensive discussion of the "consumption" of the Caribbean by Western European society, see Minni Sheller, *Consuming the Caribbean: From Arawaks to Zombies* (London: Routlege, 2003). Print.

commodification continues unabated, with the complicity of Caribbean governments and citizens in the name of free trade. [3]

One of the most prominently commodified Caribbean exports has been Anglophone Carnival music.[4] During Carnival, an annual celebration for most Anglophone Caribbean islands,[5] revelers suspend social mores in favor of a more relaxed party atmosphere.[6] Despite occurring only once a year, Carnival has become and remains the predominant image of the Caribbean for the rest of the world. It is precisely this image of the happy, party-loving native (in addition to the serene beaches) that underpins the Caribbean tourism industry. The musics most closely associated with Carnival, primarily calypso and soca, often present this image in lyric and video form.

Carnival music is a distinguishing feature of most Anglophone Caribbean countries; its history accepted by revelers, citizens, politicians, and scholars as integral to Caribbeanness. Calypsonians, who sing the most popular forms of Carnival music, calypso/soca, occupy a highly lauded status within Caribbean societies and use their voices to magnify issues of the masses to the political administration and other influential groups within the society. These issues range include policy critiques, unemployment,

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[3] Frank Moya Pons, *History of the Caribbean* (Princeton, NJ: Markus Weiners Publishers. 2007). Print.
[4] The Caribbean, because of the varied Western European settlements which colonized the region, is made up of peoples speaking a variety of languages from Dutch and Portuguese to English and French, to hybrid patois and creoles. However, for this project, the islands that I will be focusing on are primarily those who are now primarily Anglophone: i.e. English is *the* official national language or one of the official national languages. This choice is made because the islands in which calypso and soca are sung are primarily English speaking.
[5] Jamaica is one of the most notable exceptions.
[6] Trinidad, Grenada, and Dominica hold Carnival as part of the Catholic calendar, just prior to lent, while in Barbados, it is celebrated as the culmination of the harvesting of the sugarcane season. St. Lucia, Antigua and other Anglophone islands observe it during the summer months to try to entice more regional and global tourists to visit. The majority of the population takes part in the festivities, no matter which country holds Carnival.

lack of public sector funding, sexual assault, political scandals, and—most importantly for this dissertation—the sexual and cultural mores that govern heterosexual relationships.

For more than half of the Caribbean's recorded history, men, who unsurprisingly privileged their vantage points and their issues within such relationships, sang Carnival music. These male calypsonians sang of scheming, cheating, and avaricious women using their feminine wiles to capture, keep and use men for their money, material goods, and procreation. As a result, Carnival music became the repository of much anti-woman sentiment, which continues in the 21st century.

The codification of anti-woman sentiment in Carnival musics is of particular importance in the 21st century context, where changing ideas of gender and nationality have expanded to incorporate the new neoliberal global economy. The women's movement in the Caribbean, through the 1970s and 1980s, brought about more female public figures willing to critique patriarchy just as colonies sought independence from England. And Carnival calypso music became a key site for that critique. Because female calypsonians challenged entrenched anti-woman sentiments by singing of their lived experiences of spousal battery, delinquent fathers, and men "running" after multiple women, post-1970 male calypsonians generally stopped singing about heterosexual relationships except in metaphoric ways that fit the larger theme of independence. Despite this, anti-female songs continued to thrive as audiences had grown used to these themes, and these songs later found a home in soca, where they became the basis of post-independence Carnival music.

Shortly after independence, Caribbean nationals pivoted to Carnival party music (soca) in the 1980s and 1990s, a move that expanded soca's reach throughout the islands. This new party music, utilizing the anti-woman sentiments that formerly defined calypso, soon co-opted soca and replaced calypso as the most popular Carnival music. Soca music and themes spread through the Caribbean and spawned subgenres that all focused on heterosexual relationship songs. As with calypso, initially only men sang these anti-woman songs. Yet unlike calypso, when female artists entered the soca field they did *not* critique the prevailing anti-woman sentiments, as these had morphed to instruction songs which targeted a general populace that included women. Instructive soca songs told their audiences what moves to perform, either as part of a cohesive narrative or as random actions. These songs initially instructed the audience, en masse, to perform an action. Although general instructive songs were common and popular, so too were instructive songs which urged women to perform particular dance moves such as wining, a pelvic gyration. Instead, female soca artists used the feminist movement to embrace their sexuality and urge the female audience to proudly display their wining skills. Nevertheless, doing so played into dominant patriarchal narratives that privileged the male gaze, making women the spectacles of any soca show. More importantly, instructive songs fit perfectly into soca's main narrative about women: that they use their wining expertise to entice men into sex, then into a relationship which will ultimately lead to marriage. Of the aforementioned list, society says that men should only want sex, without any long-term attachment. These narratives mirrored the Eurocentric idea of women generally but Caribbean (black) women specifically, a feature that made soca more easily accessible to former colonial subjects both in the Caribbean and abroad.

The waves of Caribbean nationals who had migrated to Global North countries such as the U.S., England, and Canada represented a potentially much larger audience for soca artists than ever before. Thanks to the relative ease of airplane travel in the 1980s and 1990s, artists could reach Caribbean diasporas in these countries; thus by the early 21st century, soca had established a large and enthusiastic consumer base.

The new diasporic populace prized anything reminiscent of "home," both emotionally and monetarily. The main event that satisfies the Caribbean diaspora's desire for "home" is Carnival. And the one country that has always defined Caribbean Carnival is Trinidad and Tobago. By the early 2000s, virtually every Caribbean state had an official Carnival modelled on Trinidad's, complete with Carnival parties at which soca songs played and artists performed. Diasporic audiences consume as much Caribbeanness as they can during Carnival; they revel in meeting and partying with fellow Caribbeans; buy Caribbean signifiers such as national flags, coloured powder to fling/spray onto revelers in joy,[7] and music; then perform their Caribbeanness at shows and parties that they gladly pay to attend. It is at such events that diasporics can best display their Caribbeanness, by singing soca songs and performing the instructed dance moves. While they embrace this slice of "home", they absorb and reinforce the ideas of the primarily instructive lyrics while simultaneously expecting images similar to that of global performers of colour.

This dissertation focuses primarily on the lyrical content of instructive soca songs by Caribbean women, often of colour, and how they negotiate issues of gender within

[7] This is a Trinidadian Carnival feature, as it is linked with their large Hindu population who celebrate the festival of Diwali, at which throwing coloured powder is common.

national, regional, and global contexts. I use the small Caribbean island of St. Lucia as a case study in how female soca artists struggle with entrenched ideas of appropriate themes and acceptable images and persona for women on a local and global level, while trying to remain relevant and lucrative in their singing careers. Through this process, I examine and compare the history of Caribbean Carnival and Carnival musics in Trinidad and St. Lucia. I then historicize the Caribbean woman's role in soca as an artist and the object of most instructive soca songs. Next, I analyse the songs of three female St. Lucian calypso/soca artists that exemplify how female artists respond to national, regional, and global contexts. Finally, I interrogate the emphasis on the monetized female body at the heart of the commodification of soca within a neoliberal context by analyzing songs by the most popular female soca artists.

TALKING CALYPSO MUSIC: A BRIEF HISTORY OF TRINIDADIAN CARNIVAL

To speak of calypso music, is to speak of Trinidad, as most of the history of Carnival as we know it has focused on this Anglophone island. First colonized by Spain in 1498, French Haitians later controlled the island until it became a British colony in 1802.[8] French colonials began the annual Carnival celebration in the 1700s as a series of elaborate costume balls and a parade; they were also Carnival's main participants, along with French Creoles (descendants of Caribbean whites) and "coloureds" (those who had black in their ancestry, similar to the 'one drop rule').[9] After emancipation in 1834,

[8] See: "Trinidad and Tobago History." The Commonwealth.org. Commonwealth, NA. 29 May 2016.
[9] In Trinidad English a "creole" is a person "born in the Caribbean but of foreign descent" while a "coloured" is "a person having a mixture and African and European descent." Lise Winer, *Dictionary of the English/Creole of Trinidad and Tobego* ((Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2009), 262, 231. However, a "creole may also be a "person primarily of African descent and cultural-ethnic identification (Wise, *Dictionary* 262).

Carnival could no longer operate as under slavery, when local whites decided which free slaves would gain the privilege of attending it. Emancipation meant that former slaves could now participate in the merriment of carnival. As a result, French and Creole colonials stopped participating, leaving the newly-freed people of colour to create their own version of Carnival. ~~N~~o coordination or overarching theme defined this new Carnival, as the whites who had traditionally organized its balls and costumes had withdrawn from the festivities.[10]

By the 1880s what remained was the "Jammette Carnival," so-called because of the "wide currency at that time of the word (diamètre or diamèt) which was applied to what almost amounted to a class in the community, the people below the diameter of respectability, or the 'underworld'."[11] The uncoordinated and uncontrolled nature of this new Carnival soon became associated with the poor, as whites and more affluent former slaves came to deride the event. Its overriding image became scantily-clad black people parading through the streets in "splendid squalor [where] [e]very negro male and female, wore a white flesh-coloured mask," in explicit parody of a long-standing white tradition of dressing in blackface.[12] This quote highlights how abhorrent the upper classes of Trinidad found the former slaves who had taken over their prized Carnival festival and

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[10] Fraser, a 19th century writer, says, "'After the Emancipation of the slaves things were materially altered, the ancient lines of demarcation between the classes were obliterated and as a natural consequence the carnival degenerated into a noisy and disorderly amusement for the lower classers'" Quoted in Andrew Pearse, "Carnival in the Nineteenth Century Trinidad," *Caribbean Quarterly* 4.75 (1956): 175-93 at 183. For a more in-depth discussion of the initial frivolity of carnival before emancipation and the chaos which ensued after emancipation. See Pearse, "Carnival in the Nineteenth Century Trinidad." 3. *JSTOR*. Web. 27 Sept. 2012.

[11] Pearse, "Carnival in the Nineteenth Century Trinidad" 180. Also see Winer, *Dictionary* 460, who suggests this is a folk-etymology, the actual origin being more likely to be from Wolof *jam* "slave" plus the French feminie suffix *–ette.*

[12] Pearse, "Carnival in the Nineteenth Century Trinidad" 185.

seemed to be either trying to be white or mocking the whites with their "white flesh-coloured masks.' So close to the end of slavery, black people were still associated with poverty and social immorality, and the upper classes interpreted their every action as evidence of morally abjectness and cravenness.

Toward the end of the 19th century, the unruly behaviour of poor women/*prostitutes/jammetes*[13] and males/*bad johns* effectively alienated the middle class, and so Carnival truly became a festival for the bottom of Trinidadian society. The middle and upper Trinidadian classes labelled poor, black Trinidadians as immoral in gendered ways. Poor black women were all labelled prostitutes/*jammettes* (French patois for prostitute) based on their revealing, tattered clothing and their proximity to real prostitutes who lived in the same areas. Poor prostitutes and non-prostitutes (other poor women) were routinely rounded up by colonial police and all forced to 'register' as prostitutes, an act which legally labelled them all prostitutes, signalling that their bodies were for sale, whether they were prostitutes or not. The upper classes labelled black men troublemakers/*bad johns* also because of their tattered clothing and their aggressive stances. Both these women and men were beyond moral redemption and revealed this immorality in their loud and boisterous behaviour during Carnival. Therefore, Jammette Carnival's displays of immorality and social decadence, in the eyes of the upper classes, showed in Carnival characters of the "*diametre* … made up of stickmen, singers, drummers, dancers, prostitutes (another meaning of *jamette*), *bad johns* (swashbucklers), *matadors* (madames), *dunois* (*jamette* rowdies), *makos* (panders) obeahmen (practitioners

[13] Many poor women who participated in Carnival were labelled prostitutes, whether they were or not, and then forced to 'register' as such.

of magic) and corner boys,"[14] which became the focus of social disapproval. These women were to act like men in the fields, but had to be more *gentil* away from the workplace. As a result, black women were chastised specifically "for their provocative behaviour, for 'startling bystanders by opening their bodices and exposing their breasts … openly solicit[ing] men (particularly of the middle class), w[earing] sexually revealing clothing and danc[ing] indecently on the streets'."[15] Conservative British rulers and local whites focused their outrage on the black women's behaviour rather than the men's. The idea of black women with lax morals running loose on the streets heightened colonial fears of major changes coming after Emancipation. The British rulers were afraid that the former slaves would rebel against them for slights done while they were enslaved and that rebellions like the Jamaican Morant Bay Rebellion (1865) might encourage Trinidadians to protest in a similar vein.[16] To control this situation, prior to Carnival celebrations, authorities began imprisoning large numbers of musicians, women, and juveniles.

Initially, the French plantocracy in Trinidad assumed that poor slaves were genuinely trying to emulate their betters and allowed Carnival to continue.[17] What

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[14] John Cowley, *Carnival, Canboulay, and Calypso: Traditions in the Making* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 72, Cowley's chaper 3: "'Not a cent to buy rice": poverty, reveley and riots, 1870-1896, 67-133, provides much more in-depth information on the economic forces which created these groups.

[15] Jocelyne Guilbault, *Governing Sound: The Cultural Politics of Trinidad's Carnival Musics* (Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press. 2007), 44, quoting Hollis Urban Lester Liverpool, "'Rituals of Power and Rebellion: The Carnival Tradition in Trinidad and tobego" (Unpublished Dissertation, University of Michigan, 1993), 369. See Hollis "Chalkdust" Liverpool, *Rituals of Power and Rebellion: The Carnival Tradition in Trinidad and Tobego 1763-1962* (Chicago: Research Associates School Times Publications, 2001), 276.

[16] "Morant Bay Rebellion." *Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia*. Wikimedia Foundation, Inc. 23 May 2016. Web. 6 June 2016.

[17] Hollis "Chalkdust" Liverpool explains, "Carnival cultural activities were allowed in all the islands of the Caribbean for these were seen as harmless innocent amusements which were necessary for the happiness of

actually transpired was that slaves attained a level of agency through Carnival, especially via a musical component that gave voice to their discontents and embodied their resistance under the guise of revelry. Calypso, an amalgamation of African rhythms and European music, with the drum as its primary instrument, came to symbolize the only power the newly freed populace could wield against whites, who still held the power in Trinidadian society.[18]

SHORT HISTORY OF TRINIDADIAN POPULAR MUSIC: CALYPSO

As with the history of Carnival, Trinidad offers the best documentation of popular calypso music. Between 1494 and 1820, Europeans legally transported people from the West African Coast across the Atlantic to the New World to relieve the plight of the indigenous Indians because "the labour of one Negro was more valuable than that of four Indians."[19] Throughout black slavery, music offered one of the few ways for slaves to retain their African heritage, and voice their resistance, concerns, and feelings without

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the enslaved Africans" (*Rituals of Power* 97). He further emphasizes: "The cultural heritage of Africans, it must be understood, met with less overt opposition in the Caribbean islands than on the American mainland" (*Rituals of Power* 98). Therefore, though similar to the rituals of carnival in Europe, Caribbean revellers expressed their critiques of slavery relatively openly in mockery of the planters and overseers.

[18]For more information on the importance of music to Carnival and the rise of steel drums in calypso music see: Dick Hebdige, *Cut'N'mix: Culture, Identity and Caribbean Music* (London: Melthuen, 1987. Also, of note is the acceptance that "[i]n its earliest manifestations, calypso music emerged in response to a cultural climate that demanded creative modes of expression that could both resist and record the historical and political changes taking place in Trinidad": Patricia J. Saunders , "Introduction," Sandra Pauchet Paquet,, Patricia J. Saunders, and Stephen Stuempfle,, eds., *Music, Memory, Resistance: Calypso and the Caribbean Literary Imagination* (Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 2007), xvii-xlii at xvii.

[19] Dr. Eric Williams' collection of historical documents is a fount of valid information. This particular phrase traces to letter no. 127. *The Preservation of the Indians: The Dominicans from Documents of West Indian History*, ed. Dr. Eric Williams (Brooklyn, NY: A&B Books Publishers, 1994 – first published 1963), 142.

Also, see: "Atlantic Slave Trade." *Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia*. Wikimedia Foundation, Inc. 2 June 2016. Web. 6 June 2016.

penalty from planters and overseers.[20] Music was especially effective because the new British rulers could not easily understand the French Kwéyòl spoken by most of the Trinidadian populace. Coming from cultures that used singing and dancing as cultural expressions, black slaves continued using those as forms of cultural discourse, even when punished by planters and overseers. The slaves had "music for every occasion. There are work songs, songs for births, marriages and deaths, songs to celebrate victories over enemies or to inspire warriors going into battle."[21] Music thus became the tool of choice to voice discontent with the colonial structure. Unfortunately, "only the most generalized idea exists as to the musical forms and the lyrics which they knew and shared."[22] More relevant is the importance music continued to have in the slaves' lives regardless of which European country ruled a given island. Thus, the music of discontent grew ever more prominent during the Jammette Carnival celebrations that followed emancipation.

Well before emancipation, before black Trinidadians could participate in white Carnival, black slaves celebrated through music and dance at nights and on weekends, away from their daily toil in the fields. The dances and songs often shared the same names, thus both the dance and its accompanying music shared the name Calenda.[23] Depending on the island, Calenda, the precursor to calypso, "was a funeral-dance, for

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[20] In *Cut 'N' Mix*, Dick Hebdige says: "One of the less obvious ways in which the slaves fought back was through their music. Music was one of the means through which they could express their resentment, anger and frustration. … Other instruments helped the slaves in subtler [sic] ways. Drumming was particularly important. By preserving African drumming traditions, by remembering African rhythms, the slaves could keep alive the memory of the freedom they had lost. They could keep a part of themselves free from European influence" (26).

[21] Hebdige, *Cut 'N' Mix* 30

[22] Rohlehr, Gordon. *Calypso and Society in Pre-Independence Trinidad*. (Port of Spain, Trinidad: Gordon Rohlehr, 1990), 6.

[23] Rohlehr explains that there was no standardized spelling for this event as it was also called "(Calenda, Kalinda, etc.)" (*Calypso and Society* 11). See also Winer *Dictionary* "Kalinda," 484-85 and the references there.

others a display of sexual exhibitionism and for others a stick dance."[24] Calypso scholars have described Calenda songs and dances as "'grossly personal satirical ballad[s], [which were] the favourite dance all the way from [Louisiana] to Trinidad. To dance it publicly is not allowed this side of the West Indies'."[25] It was the dancing that enabled colonials to label participants—especially women—as lewd and unseemly, labels that have followed the slaves' descendants through the 20th and into the 21st century.

As the women worked alongside the men in the fields, so too did they fight and sing alongside them. During Carnival songs of rivalry and lewdness, *Calendas*/*Kalendas,*[26] band members sang "accompanied by dums, shac-shacs, and other instruments."[27] The lead stickfighter, or batonnier, sang first to provoke a confrontation or test of skills. Whether men or women, batonniers were "urged on by the frenzied martial chanting of female singers known as chantwells (*chanterelle* = bird song), the batonniers would engage in the now familiar exchange of insults and boasts, both shouted and sung."[28] Competitive fighting and singing accompanied competitive dancing.

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[24] Rohlehr, *Calypso and Society* 14. In Trinidad specifically, like in many other now predominantly Anglophone countries, "[t]he majority of the songs would have been sung in French, rather than English Creole" (Rohlehr, *Calypso and Society* 10) even after Britain took control of the islands, making it difficult for the British planters to understand the music that the slaves revelled in. The slaves sang Calendas in French Creole that was "observed throughout the Antilles and in Louisiana, whose population had, like Trinidad's, increased considerably since the Haitian Revolution sent thousands of French/Creole migrants seeking refuge in the American continent" (Rohlehr 11).

[25] G. W. Cable, "The Dance in Place Congo," *The Social Implications of Early Negro Music in the United States,* ed. Bernard Katz (New York: Arno Press, 1969), 31-68 at 42 [first published 1885), quoted in Rohlehr, *Calypso and Society* 11-12.

[26] While Rohlehr, *Calypso and Society* prefers to use the spelling *Calenda*, Cowley, *Carnival* uses *Kalenda* referencing the same combat and dance.

[27] Cowley, *Carnival* 81. He gives detailed information on the regulation imposed on the stickfighters by the governor and police, and subsequently traces how those commands were received and how the skirmishes between the parties involved were solved. The "shac-shac" or "shack-shack" is a 'rattle-type musical percission rhythm instrument made of something hollow and spherical … containing a number of seeds …when shaken the seeds make a sound." Winer, *Dictionary* 806.

[28] Richard D. E. Burton, *Afro- Creole: Power, Opposition and Play in the Caribbean.* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Univerity Pressl, 1997), 175. Burton, *Afro-Creole*, 174, describes these play events as being important to

Women were not afraid to engage in physical violence like their male compatriots, and also participated in the "extempore singing by chantwell and chorus in a call and response pattern"[29] that became the hallmark of calypso's progeny, soca.

During these contests, "'females would enter the circle and sing a very lewdly erotic song accompanied by obscene dancing'"[30] pitting their physical and lyrical might and dexterity against each other and males. After Emancipation, "the singing of *caiso* seems to have become primarily a female activity brought to perfection by the 'chantwells' who accompanied the bationniers' physical strikes before, during and after the *bataille bois* with songs – sung in French Creole – of incitement and derision."[31] Women's role in the Calenda ended after British authorities outlawed the stickfights that were integral to Calenda. Once that occurred, "male dominated caiso [became] a substitute weapon over the next twenty years … In the process, women – who previously had been in action not only as chantwells [and] as stickfighters themselves – were relegated to a subsidiary or peripheral role in carnival and its associated rituals, from which they would not decisively emerge until a century later."[32] Although women helped shape the music that eventually created both calypso and soca, their input Trinidadian society effectively 'forgot' their input for most of the 20th century, as their exploits were not included in calypso histories until later during the century.

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the black people during and after slavery (Quoting Jacob Delworth Elder, "Evolution of the Traditional Calypso of Trinidad and Tobago: A Socio-Historical Analysis" (Unpublished Disertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1966]).

[29] Burton, *Afro-Creole* 176 quoting Elder "Evolution of the Traditional Calypso" 91.

[30] Burton, *Afro-Creole* 76 quoting Elder "Evolution of the Traditional Calypso" 91.

[31] Burton, *Afro-Creole* 188.

[32] Burton, *Afro-Creole* 189.

Calypso music, an integral part of carnival revelry, later gained attention for its provocative lyrics in the first half of the 20th century. With the lively call-response arrangement of West African music, calypso ensured that "each verse ends with a repeated chorus which the crowd soon learns to recognize."[33] However, in the early 20th century, as calypsos became more popular, and the Creole population ascended to more prestigious positions in Trinidadian society, those under discussion understood the sentiments against them. From the 1890s, the undercurrent of revolution, never far from the minds of Europeans and Creoles, led them to mandate the publication of calypso lyrics before Carnival and censor songs they deemed too unsettling.[34] Because of calypso's popularity with the Americans in Trinidad, it is therefore not surprising that an American obtained the lyrics and music of the popular "Working for the Yankee Dollar," and created U.S. hit.

"WORKING FOR THE YANKEE DOLLAR": CALYPSO IN THE UNITED STATES

The first indisputable calypso song to reach an international audience came from Trinidad.[35] American emcee Morey Amsterdam reworked Lord Invader's "Working for the Yankee Dollar," downplaying its critique of the rise of prostitution, as well as Trinidadian women's dismissal of local males, due to the influx of American soldiers in Trinidad during the World War II at Waller Air Force Base. Amsterdam engaged an all-girl American group, the Andrew Sisters, to sing a version of the song that became very

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[33] Hebdige *Cut 'N' Mix* 39 and, also Liverpool, *Rituals of Power* 20-21.
[34] Hebdige *Cut 'N' Mix* 40 and others show that this was the case in Trinidad in the 1890s.
[35] Songs such as "Yellow Bird" recorded by Harry Bellefonte and others are referenced as "calypso." These are not the same as calypsos as sung in Trinidad. Even Bellefonte spoke of the songs he sang as folk music and not calypso.

popular in the U.S.[36] This became calypso's entrance into the world beyond the Caribbean, shifting the trajectory of calypso from its local and national roots to international recognition.

With a strong history of calypsonians presenting concerns of the masses, it was inevitable that when pro-independence discourses arose in Trinidad calypso would be the tool to gauge public opinion and unify the public. As a result, Trinidadian Creole elites of the 1930s began to champion Carnival and calypso as *the* symbols of national unity and independence from Great Britain. Calypsonians such as Attila the Hun sang "calypsos … consist[ing] of long attacks on the Crown Colony regime" showing that Trinidadians knew who controlled the island (governors and others appointed by the Crown) and demanded that the leadership move toward self-governance. [37] That calypso was the medium through which the public expressed its ire testifies to its power as a political tool in Trinidad. This shift further amplified the elites' belief that calypso was worthy of being a national treasure, thus commencing the rebranding of calypso from disruptive, lewd, and combative to a more palatable genre aimed at the world beyond the Caribbean, albeit one that challenged British hegemony.[38] This rebranding marked the beginning of consensus-making between Creole elites and the wider (primarily black and Indian) populace to gain independence from Britain. However, the stinging lyrical criticisms soon began to centre on targets closer to home.

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36 For a more in-depth discussion of the mission of the U.S. military forces in Trinidad, please see: Maurer, Maurer. *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force; World War II. Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala*. (Washington: USAF Historical Division, Dept. of the Air Force U.S. Govt. Off., 1969). Print.

37 Hebdige, *Cut 'N' Mix* 40.

38 Guilbault foregrounds this in her book *Governing Sound* 45-63.

Even as calypso lyrics critiqued the government and colonial powers in the 1930s and 1940s, Trinidadians, as well as many Americans living in Trinidad during the first major oil exploration or soldiers stationed on the island, enjoyed the uniquely West Indian sound of calypso. Trinidad first came to American attention with the discovery of oil in the early 20th century. [39] As a result, the U.S. government relocated thousands of Americans (including African Americans) to administer and build oilrigs in Trinidad. During WWII, the U.S. asked Britain's permission to build a base in Trinidad as a defence against German submarines. [40] This led to the construction of Waller Air Force Base in 1942 and the influx of even more Americans into Trinidad. With so many Americans, mostly single males, on the island with little to do besides work, the influx became a nuisance to the locals. To fill their idle time, the American administration approved of and "invested [in] … calypso with unprecedented commercial acceptability and commercial profitability. This doubled sense of Yankee valorization would prove crucial in the creation on the expression in occupied Trinidad".[41]Calypso's popularity among Americans in Trinidad made it inevitable that the music would reach U.S. shores, as it did thanks to one especially enthusiastic American fan.

Young emcee Morey Amsterdam was particularly enamored of Lord Invader's 1943 song "Working for the Yankee Dollar." Amsterdam's enchantment with the song

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[39] Many sources reference America's entrance into Trinidadian calypso through the Waller Air Base but few discuss the Americans who came as a result of the discovery of oil prior to this Base. Neptune also ties this event to the rise in popularity of calypso. He captures this moment of what he calls the "occupation" of Trinidad by the U.S. with a focused look at 1940s nationalist and labour movements put into motion by the introduction of the U.S. companies. Ultimately, he narrates the introduction of Americans and American culture into Trinidad and their role in making calypso acceptable. See: Harvey R. Neptune, *Caliban and the Yankees: Trinidad and the United States Occupation* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007).

[40] Maurer, *Combat Squadrons.*

[41] See Maurer, *Combat Squadrons* 138.

led him to record his own version: "[Upon] returning home, Amserdam altered some of the lyrics in the verse and presented Lord Invader's composition to the Andrew Sisters as his own. The Minnesota trio then recorded a version of the calypso in October1944".[42] By the time the Andrew Sisters sang the song it had gone from critiquing the American mens' role in the increase in prostitution (hence "Working for the Yankee Dollar") to the desirability of American males to Trinidadian women because they drank "Rum and Coca Cola" (the title of the revised song).[43] The popularity of "Rum and Coca Cola," which held the number one spot on the Billboard charts for 10 weeks in 1945, led to a "calypso craze" that culminated in 1957 with Americanized calypsos making America's Top 40 and featuring in movies about the Caribbean.[44] Although this popularity sparked the first notable Caribbean copyright battle, which ended with Lord Invader winning a lawsuit against Amsterdam (who reproduced the song without Lord Invader's permission), it was "Rum and Coca Cola" that first exposed the broader world to calypso.

Amsterdam's appropriation of "Working for the Yankee Dollar" helped catapult calypso onto the global market, while reinforcing the narrative of the "happy, smiling native" through the trilling voices of the Andrew Sisters. And while calypsonians took note of calypsos repackaged for consumers beyond the Caribbean, the populations of other Caribbean islands, such as St. Lucia, also noted calypso's success in the U.S. The

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[42] Neptune, *Caliban and the Yankees* 141. See also Ray Funk, Ray and Donald R. Hill. "'Will Calypso Doom Rock'n'Roll': The U.S. Calypso Craze of 1957." *Trinidad Carnival*. eds. Garth L. Green and Philip W. Scher. Bloomington: Indiana U P, 2007 178-97 Funk and Hill. Maurer 141.

[43] Funk and Hill confirm that Amsterdam changed the lyrics in such a way as to mask the original context of the song, ensuring the critical political significance was lost on the American audience.

[44] Prior to the advent of calypso music, the way was paved with movies about the Caribbean. E.g. *White Zombie,* Directed by Victor Halperin. (Halperin Productions and RKO Radio Studios, 1932) and *I Walked with a Zombie* Directed by Jacques Tourneur. (RKO Radio Picture Studios, 1943).

success of "Rum and Coca Cola" success revealed a market that Trinidadian performers, such as The Mighty Sparrow, sought to fill. However, it took a while for calypsonians to realize that the song owed much of its success to its coded embrace of long-held ideas of the sexually promiscuous Caribbean woman and her daughter accepting money from the American male. In the original "Working for the Yankee Dollar," West Indian females were especially happy to serve/service American males. The song ultimately helped boost tourism and attendance at calypso tents, but it would take decades for Trinidad calypsonians to grasp that calypso's success outside of the Caribbean meant the sublimation of all "serious" issues and the elevation of heterosexual relationship songs.

Though heterosexual relationship calypsos existed alongside "serious" calypsos, the tent judges praised serious calypsos by promoting them through the tent competitions. This occurred because the upper classes sought to use calypso to respond to the dictates of the British colonial powers in a way that they could also garner support from the lower classes. Therefore, Trinidadian judges, made up of the elite classes, prized political calypso identifying the wrongs of the ruling British colonists over the also popular heterosexual relationship calypsos. After Trinidad became independent, these political calypsos targeted the local ruling classes and showed support or defiance of the different political parties. But in the late 20th century, singers of the heterosexual relationship song, who were effectively kept out of higher rounds of calypso, co-opted the fast pace of soca, making their music more globally resonant with people who had little context for Trinidad's political environment. And by the early 21st century, calypsonians, local music managers and businessmen, saw the value in funding calypso's progeny, soca.

This funding ensured that Trinidadian soca performers were visible participants in as many Caribbean Carnivals as possible; thereby providing a template that Carnival music singers in other Anglophone Caribbean islands would later follow.

ST. LUCIAN POPULAR MUSIC

St. Lucia is a small island in the Lesser Antilles sandwiched between French-speaking Martinique to the north, and English-speaking St. Vincent to the south and Barbados to the east. Unlike Trinidad, Carnival was not a popular event in St. Lucia until the late 1940s, and the Trinidadian conception of calypso did not become popular in St. Lucia until then. St. Lucia's Carnival traditions and Carnival music history are thus negligible in comparison to Trinidad's as they have little documentation in terms of scholarship or cultural artefacts. But Trinidad's has had over 40 years of well-researched and documented histories of Carnival and Carnival musics. Scholarship on St. Lucian music predominantly concerns folk songs, while newspapers began covering Carnival music in the 1950s, and even then only during the Carnival season. Because of these divergent histories, it is important to understand the musical atmosphere of St. Lucia prior to the advent of calypso, to appreciate how calypso eventually interacted with its established local music. Elements of St. Lucian culture that significantly affected its interaction with Carnival music include the prominence of the French Kwéyòl language, the lack of a long history of sugarcane culture, and the preeminence of the flower festivals in St. Lucia's social calendar.

St. Lucian citizens' late entrance into agriculture, as well as the popularity of the flower festivals of La Rose and La Marguerite, mean that Carnival was not an important

celebration on their calendar. Part of Carnival's roots are in the cycle of the sugarcane industry. During Carnival celebrations prior to the 1850s, the French ruling classes in Trinidad depicted scenes of *Cannes Brulées* (buring sugar), reenacting scenes of slaves being forcibly roused in the early morning to hurriedly harvest the cane when fire threatened to burn the sugarcane crop. These reenacted early morning scenes eventually formed the basis of Trinidadian Carnival, Jour Ouvert.[45] This event, initially called *Cannes Brulées,* later *Canboulay*, finally resulted in Carnival.[46] St. Luca, as a coaling port for centuries, boasted no commercial agricultural crop until the British took over in 1814, even though its mountainous terrain made it unsuitable for growing sugarcane. However, Britain abolished slavery within a few decades of sugarcane's institution on the island so St. Lucians never felt a strong connection with sugarcane histories, and instead stuck to the musical and social histories that they knew, that of the flower festivals.[47]

The La Rose and La Marguerite flower festivals were entrenched parts of St. Lucian society, which occupied the national spotlight that Carnival did in Trinidad. As far back as the 1800s, Henry Breen identified these flower festivals as a prominent part of St. Lucian life. Although he claims that these societies were enacted by the "[n]egroes …[i]n order to gratify their propensity for dancing [, he later says the] "laboring classes and domestic servants … take part in [the societies'] proceedings[, and that] there is scarcely an individual in the island, from Governor downwards who is not enrolled

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[45] Throughout this dissertation, I will use the spelling "Jour Ouvert" for this celebration because St. Lucia uses this spelling instead of the French Kwéyòl "*jou ouvè.*"
[46] See: "J'Ouvert (Jouvay)'s Wonderful, Fantastic, Dangerous Magic." ***Phenderson Djèlí Clark: The Musings of a Disgruntled Haradrim …*** Phenderson Djèlí Clark. 3 Mar. 2014. Web. 6 June 2016.
[47] See: Tennyson S.D. Joseph, *Decolonization in St. Lucia: Politics and the Global Neoliberalism, 1945-2010.*(Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2011), 21-22. Print.

amongst the partisans of one coterie or the other" [48] Breen obviously wants to see this as only a black dance activity, but he cannot completely ignore the colonial elites' participation in the societies. In so doing, he supports the later claim of Crowley that the groups mimic St. Lucian society. Each group has the following members in their "executive": a king, a queen, princes/princesses, as well as other lesser members such as judges, lawyers, police officers, soldiers and nurses.[49] These societies were the most popular social events, complete with their own French Kwéyòl song traditions, making it difficult for English calypso to take a foothold in St. Lucia.

Like other islands in the Caribbean, St. Lucia was one of the first territories identified in the New World. And, as with many other Caribbean islands, early Europeans exterminated St. Lucia's indigenous inhabitants and replaced them with enslaved Africans via the Triangular Trade. As part of the ensuing centuries-long land grab among various Western European countries, France and England alternately held St. Lucia, with England finally establishing control in 1812, 10 years after colonizing Trinidad.[50] This alternating ownership between countries, which spoke different languages and practiced very different cultures, left St. Lucians with a split national consciousness. Although officially British, much of the French culture, tradition, laws, and language remained, to the extent that "[a]s late as the 1840s, the government was under both French and English

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[48] See: Henry Breen, *St. Lucia: Historical, Statistical and Descriptive* (London: Longman, Brown, Green and Longmans 1884), 191-92.
[49] See: Daniel J. Crowley, "La Rose and La Marguerite Societies in St. Lucia," *The Journal of American Folklore* 71.282 (1958): 541-52. *JSTOR*. Web. 12 Feb. 2016.
[50] Jocelyne Guilbault, "Oral and Literate Strategies in Performances: The La Rose and La Marguerite Organizations in St. Lucia,"" *Yearbook for Traditional Music*. 19 (1987): 97-115 at 98. *JSTOR*. Web. 10 Apr 2013.

laws. And it was only in 1842 that all the laws were enacted in English.[51] Of particular import for our purposes is the maintenance of French festivals that embraced the use of 'bastardized French' (French Kwéyòl) in their celebratory songs.

As in Trinidad, music forms a significant part of the lives of St. Lucians, although documentation of its specific forms and practices remains scarce. The available documentation from the 1950s indicates a St. Lucian social calendar built around festivals, each of which employed its own folk musical accompaniment. Although Carnival was one of these festivals, it did not enjoy as much popularity in St. Lucia as it did in Trinidad. From Fisherman's Feast and New Year's festivities, to the La Rose and La Marguerite flower festivals, St Lucian locals performed activities and songs in French Kwéyòl.[52] The most popular and well-researched events, the La Rose and La Marguerite festivals, featured songs in French Kwéyòl to the accompaniment of local musical instruments (shack-shack, cow bell, grater, banjo, tambo bamboo, etc.). The songs were primarily call/response songs, in which the chantwèl (female singer) sang a line of each verse and the audience repeated it. Few of these songs were written down, as French Kwéyòl was considered as the language of the poor and thus not worthy of documentation. As a result, the few scholars who collect these songs fail to interrogate their recurring issues, instead analysing the songs for their linguistic attributes and musical structures.[53]

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[51] See: Guilbault, "Oral and Literate Strategies in Performance."
[52] See Daniel J. Crowley, "Festivals of the Calendar in St. Lucia." *Caribbean Quarterly*. 4. 2 (1955): 99-121. *JSTOR*. Web. 11 Jan 2012.
[53] Tellingly, thus far, the only scholarly work currently available to me are Jocelyne Guilbault's "Musical Events in the Lives of the People of a Caribbean Island, St. Lucia," (Unpublished Dissertation, University of Michigan, 1984) and three articles by Daniel J. Crowley: "Festivals of the Calendar in St. Lucia," *Caribbean Quarterly*. 4. 2 (1955): 99-121; "La Rose and La Marguerite Societies in St. Lucia," *The*

Although documentation of Carnival festivities in St. Lucia, scholarly or otherwise, prior to the 20th century is meagre, the centuries-long practice of shipping slaves between islands suggests that cultural festivals may have travelled with transported slaves. Hence the 19th-century charge that immigrants to Trinidad from Barbados and Martinique caused "indecent songs and dance" to be performed may indicate a higher tolerance for such songs in colonies other than Trinidad. [54] It is not a stretch to believe that migration between Trinidad and St. Lucia, Barbados, and Martinique yielded both people and their customs, which mingled with the customs already established in the receiving island. British- and French-speaking respectively, Barbados and Trinidad have particularly carried on a lively trade of goods and people with St. Lucia.

The rise of modern Carnival's influence in St. Lucia—and that of its music, calypso—began in the mid-1960s, but did not help fuel St. Lucian independence. Although St. Lucians sought independence from Britain just as Trinidadians did, calypso did not play as strong a part in rallying the masses as it did in Trinidad. Instead, St. Lucians saw it as musical entertainment for British and American tourists, not for the French Kwéyòl speaking masses of St. Lucia. Calypso became a way to embrace Caribbean unity and to solidify independence after the fact. In the 1980s, with St. Lucia's independence freshly minted on 22nd February 1979, the St. Lucian government sought to identify a uniquely St. Lucan culture that could claim a past and future. The Ministry of Culture thus labelled French Kwéyòl language and customs as St. Lucia's past, and

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Journal of American Folklore. 71.282 (1958): 541-52; and "Song and Dance in St. Lucia," *Ethnomusicology*. 1.9 (1957): 4-14. Guilbault hails from Canada and Crowley from the United States, and while I believe more articles may have been written by St. Lucian scholars or intellectuals, I have at present been unable to identify any.

[54] Cowley, *Carnival*, 98.

positioned calypso as its future. To emphasise this distinction, the government funded song, dance and national dress competitions, sent people out to collect oral histories and antique items from older St. Lucians, in an effort to acknowledge French Kwéyòl as a legitimate St. Lucian language and culture, and embarked on a massive plan to educate the youth on local French Kwéyòl names and uses of flora and fauna.[55] Many of the organizations and competitions created then remain, with these cultural 'artefacts' now housed at the St. Lucia Folk Research Centre.

From the array of festivals and song forms associated with them, St. Lucia's government chose calypso and Carnival as major icons of "St. Lucianness" even as the larger populace had yet to accept calypso as "St. Lucian. Some St. Lucian intellectuals believe that calypso came to St. Lucia via Mark Jackson (Lord Jackson), the son of a Trinidadian.[56] Jackson used Trinidad's calypso tent and song evaluation model to organize St. Lucia's calypso tents, perhaps unwittingly instituting language barriers for local French Kwéyòl speakers. Through Jackson's efforts, St. Lucia imported much of the hallmarks of Trinidadian calypso. By the late 20th century, calypso's prestige overshadowed other St. Lucian musics; attendance had steadily decreased at the flower festivals and other events, rendering their respective musics less popular than calypso. Moreover, the importation of calypso from Trinidad brought with it the belief that only men would perform, in direct opposition to other types of local music that allowed both men and women to participate. Now labelled as "folk," the popular local music featuring

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[55] A more recent impulse in this direction is the inexpensive *Kwéyòl Dictionary,* ed. David Frank et al. (Castries, St. Lucia: Ministry of Education, 2001). See the editor's Preface, iii-iv.
[56] "Kaiso No. 37. July 26, 2000." *Mustrad.org.uk.* Musical Traditions Web Services, 26 Jul 200. Web. 17 Apr 2013.

chantwèls was relegated to historical status, and St. Lucian females were denied entry into the calypso arena, which now held national visibility.[57] Then as now, the "folk" label meant commercial doom for aspiring popular songs as well as their performers. Thus, any singer hoping for cultural and commercial relevance in the 1980s and beyond had to sing calypso in a Trinidadian style.

TRINIDAD AS CALYPSO'S TRENDSETTER

For Trinidad and Tobago, independence in 1962 also brought the end of British and U.S. economic support, which had been decreasing since the end of WWII. The new nation now needed to replace that lost revenue and establish itself economically.[58] Although Trinidad was rich in natural resources (oil, bauxite, natural gas, and asphalt), Trinidadians decided to capitalize on the recent calypso craze to encourage tourism during carnival season. The calypso craze had given American consumers familiarity with calypso, and Trinidad could entice vacationers to a tropical island where they could dance to songs like "Rum and Coca Cola."

Because the exportation of calypso by non-Trinidadians had made the island state so well-known beyond the Caribbean, it became a model that other Anglophone Caribbean countries were eager to emulate. Although few studies have actually considered the economic impact of calypso music on Trinidad or any other island, many governments believe that calypso is part of the reason tourists visit the islands, making it

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[57] Note also that Kwéyòl "chantwèl" means "singer (in reference to woman), choir," *Kwéyòl Dictionary* 36.
[58] Learie B. Luke, *Identity and Succession in the Caribbean: Tobago Versus Trinidad, 1889-1980* (St. Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago: University of the West Indies Press, 2007. Web. *Purdue Libraries*.

an important source of foreign income.[59] In each Anglophone Caribbean island, the government invests heavily in calypso competitions and in the last 15 years have had sponsorship help via hoteliers through their funding of hotel's calypso competitions, which produce much visitor-friendly calypsos. Most other Caribbean islands lack Trinidad's wealth of natural resources, making them even more dependent on foreign tourism.

Although Morey Amsterdam had to repackage "Working for the Yankee Dollar" as "Rum and Coca Cola" for U.S. consumption, it was the closest thing to a popular cultural commodity that any island could produce. Even if the exported product lacked its Caribbean counterpart's topicality and political relevance, as long as the source material hailed from a particular island and artist, it represented a success for nations that still depended on the global North for its economic viability. Thus even as the St. Lucian government strove to establish its cultural uniqueness during independence, it enshrined Trinidadian-style calypso as a cultural institution because of its potential to attract tourism.

THE CREATION AND RISE OF SOCA: TRINIDAD AND ST. LUCIA

Alongside serious calypso music such as the original "Working for Yankee Dollar" was party music. In the early 20th century, Trinidadian elites encouraged calypso's anti-colonial content by supporting such songs in the annual competitions; calypso has been increasingly associated with political critique and satire ever since.[60]

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[59] See Keith Nurse, *The Caribbean Music Industry* (Bridgetown, Barbados: Caribbean Export Development. Agency, 2001), 60.
[60] See Guilbault, *Governing Sound* 135-65.

Party music, which did not address social or political issues, was not welcome in the calypso tents, so it developed on the fringes of calypso's structured competitions. Party music instead concentrated on revelry and bacchanalia, harkening back to the previous century's Jammette Carnival that had appealed to Trinidad's black majority and horrified white elites. But "Rum and Coca-Cola" showed that the *serious* social commentary of "Working for the Yankee Dollar" held no appeal for non-Caribbean audiences unless reworked into a version of party music: the original's social of the American presence in Trinidad reborn as an ode to the irresistibility of American soldiers.

Because party music remained peripheral to calypso competitions for decades, scholars have seen little point in studying it. As a result, party music's origins are poorly documented even in Trinidad. Nevertheless, we know that while calypso has primarily focused on more serious topics, party music has celebrated Carnival's partying, dancing, and the promise of carnal pleasures. Social and political commentary seldom informed party music, which is why many young Caribbean people found themselves attracted to it.[61] In the 1970s, Lord Shorty I, the acknowledged originator of soca, thought that too few young people participated in Carnival because they thought the music was boring. He sought a faster rhythm to encourage younger Trinidadians to be active participants in calypso. By the 1970s, a fusion of zouk and chutney rhythms created a faster tempo complete with easy hooks, spawing a new sound that Trinidadian youth responded

[61] Though this is generally true, Curwen Best singles out St. Lucian soca performers as being one of the few Caribbean countries, which married the fast pace of soca and serious themes throughout the 1990s. See: Curwen Best, *Culture @ the Cutting Edge: Tracking Caribbean Popular Music* (Mona, Jamaica: University of the West IIndies Press. 2004). Print.

whole-heartedly, even though the lyrics were serious. Thus began the reign of soca music in the Caribbean.

Soca, originating in Trinidad, follows in the calypsonian tradition of voicing societal and political issues through song. Although calypso focuses on many topics, serious and otherwise, bourgeois Creoles (especially tent organizers and government officials), most highly regarded performers who addressed social and political issues at slow tempos to encourage listeners' contemplation. These songs' serious topics, combined with the slow music, failed to engage younger listeners. But the emergence in the early 1970s of Trinidad's Lord Shorty (later Ras Shorty I after converting to Rastafarianism), who wedded calypso's lyrical concerns to faster rhythms such as zouk and chutney, successfully introduced social and political issues to a younger audience.[62] Lord Shorty melded Afro-Caribbean rhythms and Indian Chutney music to create a "modern form of calypso with an up-tempo beat," as soca is usually described. In other words, he "rhythmed up" calypso songs to resemble the faster dance tunes, becoming "more popular with young audiences who followed his revolutionary masterpieces of soca," while also satisfying bourgeois Creoles' preference for more substantive lyrics.[63] Combining Indian and African rhythms with Creole and Hindu lyrics, in addition to the social and political commentary common to calypso, Lord Shorty also brought public

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[62] See Karla Slocumand Deborah A. Thomas, "Rethinking Global and Area Studies: Insights from Caribbeanist Anthropology,"" *American Anthropologist* 105.3 (2008): 553-65. Zouk is a form of Caribbean music based on French beats popular mainly in Caribbean French dependents or former French colonies: See Jocelyne Guilbault, *Zouk: World Music in the West Indies*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993. Chutney is "an Indo-Trinidadian folk music performed during Hindu weddings." See: Aisha Mohammed, "Love and Anxiety: Gender Negotiations in Chutney-Soca Lyrics in Trinidad," *Caribbean Review of Gender Studies* 1 (2007): 1-42.

[63] Earl Lawrence. Qtd in Empressdududahlin Thread. "Ran Across this Tribute to Ras Shorty I!" Islandmix. 24 Dec. 2003. Web. 19 Jan. 2011.

attention to the animosity between Trinidad and Tobago's two largest ethnic groups and sought to unite the groups by melding their musics. By fusing these diverse cultural elements, Lord Shorty created a new calypso sound that especially appealed to younger audiences. That new sound became known as soca.[64]

Concurrent with the rise of soca in the 1970s and 1980s was the mass migration of Caribbean people to the Global North in concert with Margaret Thatcher's neoliberal movement. Due to labour shortages after WW II, the U.K. and other European countries sought immigrant labour from Asia and the Caribbean.[65] Caribbean people willingly went, seeing programs such as the Commonwealth Immigration Act as an opportunity to earn more money so that their families could have a better life. And with them they brought Caribbean culture and maintained a thirst for information and news of 'home'.[66] Many wanted aspects of their lives back in the Caribbean to be available in their new home. One way they accomplished this was through patronizing touring calypsonians like The Mighty Sparrow (now just Sparrow). Through their songs, diasporic Caribbean people could glean much about the political and social situations back 'home.' But as the years passed, second and third generation Caribbean people found it difficult to connect with the double-entendres and island motifs. Increasingly they saw the Caribbean more through the lens of a privileged tourist than that of a Caribbean local and therefore could not appreciate the calypso that their parents and grandparents favoured. But they still clung to their Caribbean roots, and now view soca as an updated sound from 'home.'

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[64] Ekeama Goddard. "Soca, Gender and Globalization" (Unpublished Master's Thesis, Purdue University 2008).
[65] See Donley T. Studlar, "From Collectivist Consensus to 21st Century Neoliberalism: Orders and Eras in Postwar Britain," *The Forum* 5.3 (2007): 1-20. *De Gruyter*. Web. 14 Apr 2013.
[66] See: Mary Chamberlain, *Caribbean Migration: Globalized Identities* (London: Routledge, 1998).

The legacy of Lord Shorty's foundational soca became an advertising tool for Trinidad, creating a regional and international brand that other Caribbean islands sought to emulate. By the 1980s, party music had co-opted soca's upbeat sound, replacing the latter's social and political issues with its mostly heterosexual relationship-based themed. In other words, soca morphed into party music.[67] With the help of performers such as Super Blue, Arrow Burning Flames, and others, soca spread throughout the Caribbean and, following Trinidad's lead, other islands started producing their own socas.

But riding Trinidad's coattails was not as simple as singing its songs and marketing to its audience. It involved seeming authentically Trinidadian by appropriating as much of the larger island's calypso and soca styles as possible, thereby manifesting the Carnival Institute of Trinidad and Tobago's (CITT) hope to "act as the central organising body of Trinidad-style carnivals across the world." [68] Many Caribbean countries have become Trinidadian by grafting Trinidad's history in regard to calypso to that of own islands with the help of Trinidadian infrastructure, thereby masking the histories of each individual island with replications of Trinidadian history. Although I believe that CITT wanted a Trinidad-styled Carnival outside of the Caribbean region, an unintended, but profitable, consequence was Trinidad-styled Carnivals being mimicked throughout the Anglophone Caribbean.

By the start of the 21st century, with travel faster and access to world news and culture more easily available, the Caribbean diaspora had abandoned Lord Shorty's

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[67] Though soca is seen as party music, calypsonians like David Rudder and Black Stallion still manage to sing songs which live up to Ras Shorty I's *initial* focus on serious issues.

[68] Philip W. Scher, "Heritage Tourism in the Caribbean: The Politics of Culture after Neoliberalism," *Bulletin of Latin American Research*. 30.1 (2011): 7-20 at 13. *Project Muse*. Web. 2 July 2014.

foundational soca in favour of a new model that celebrated the sun and fun of the Caribbean. Soca artists such as Destra Garcia, Machel Montano, Alison Hinds and Ricky T now regularly perform for audiences in London, Toronto, New York, and Miami. The carnival circuit that encompasses these cities constitutes a year-round festival, bringing a bit of 'home' to the diaspora. But 3rd- and 4th-generation Caribbean diasporics, who have grown up hearing about "home" but seldom visiting, see the islands as more of a vacation destination than a true homeland. As a result, they now more readily consume music that requires much less background knowledge to decode.[69] Soca is now more popular than calypso, and has become a major export to every country with a significant West Indian population.[70]

One island currently following Trinidad's example is St. Lucia, which hopes to become as famous for its soca as Trinidad. Although St. Lucia has its own history of calypso as "serious" music, St. Lucian performers have managed to merge elements of their own local folk music with Trinidadian soca, creating a subgenre that again melds serious topics with danceable tunes and offers new possibilities for export.[71] In so doing, St. Lucians continue the Caribbean's centuries-long history of earning money through the

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[69] Hollis "Chalkdust" Liverpool explains that "in London and in the North American cities where migrants from the Caribbean have instituted Carnival, the majority of people are ignorant about the nature of calypso: it is stereotyped in their minds as music for tourists" ("Researching Steelband and Calypso Music in the British Caribbean and the U.S. Virgin Islands" 180) as this the only context in which non-Caribbean identified people encounter calypso. The political and social satire is lost on them, as they have not experienced that kind of calypso. Some of this idea of calypso also transmits to 2nd and 3rd generation Caribbean identified people as they are removed from the political and social situations referenced in serious calypso. Soca therefore becomes an entry point into music from home, in which they already have some social knowledge.

[70] Canada, United States, United Kingdom, Germany, etc.

[71] Curwen Best, "Technology Constructing Culture: Tracking Soca's First 'Post," *Small Axe*. 9 (2001): 27-43.

exportation of unusual or unique commodities. And like slavery, the unique commodity of soca relies on the bodies of Caribbean women to aid in export.

SOCA AND TECHNOLOGY = FEMALE COMMODIFICATION

As the newest and most popular form of Carnival music, soca combines gendered views of Caribbean women with the latest technological innovation. Soca has become the repository of heterosexual relationship songs from predominantly male singers. The prevalence of instructive songs within this context thus renders women's bodies as soca's primary focus. Additionally, soca's heavy dependence on the latest musical technology, be it synthesizers or sound mixing and sampling software, as well as personal websites to promote and distribute their music, makes it popular with younger audiences across the Caribbean who are keyed in to new technologies of the 21st century. This also allows performers and producers more immediate access to their fanbse. Moreover, the dominance of visual media on the internet has further emphasized the seminal image at the core of soca music: the body of the Caribbean woman.

Euro-American feminist theory has long critiqued the social impact of gendered norms, focusing in the 1990s especially on gender as performance.[72] The growing prevalence of Caribbean women singers has attracted some contemporary discussion of feminism in Caribbean music. This dialogue has overwhelmingly focused on dance as public, gendered performance in dancehall[73] and calypso, the main Anglophone

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[72] Judith Butler looks at "gendered expressions" in *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. See Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (London: Routledge, 2006). Print.

[73] Carolyn Cooper's *Noises in the Blood: Orality, Gender and the "Vulgar" Body of Jamaican Popular Culture* and *Sound Clash: Jamaican Dancehall Culture at Large* (Durham: Duke University Press. 1995) investigate women who dance and participate in the dancehall culture of Jamaica and also speaks of the

Caribbean music genres.[74] Specifically, these scholars investigate women's wining, pelvic rotation, and report on societal assumptions that only with women of loose morals engage enthusiastically in this behaviour. Although gender as performance is integral to how both male and female soca artists present themselves on stage, my focus is less on the physical performance of gender than on how soca lyrics validate that physical performance.

No scholars have questioned why soca lyrics focus on sexual and instructive themes, and little research examines the underlying assumptions that inform these songs and their meaning as a whole. Many local commentators realize that the profit motive drives soca artists to produce particular songs that will sell, but few grasp the links between the external neoliberal economic imperatives that impact Caribbean cultures, and how these imperatives in turn drive soca's lyrical contents.

The accessibility of both video equipment (even in smart phones) at relatively affordable prices and the platforms to disseminate video content worldwide on sites such as YouTube has made it imperative to market new songs in terms of their visual *and* lyrical content. Soca performers, offering a product that references dance styles and party themes, reinforce established narratives of the oversexualized Caribbean body and pepper their music videos with sensual, scantily clad women (and to a lesser extent, men). Soca fetishizes women and their bodies, but allows very few women into the industry except as

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female dancehall artists whose smutty lyrics and sensual performances make them stand out in dancehall circles.

[74] Some scholars who look at women's performances on stage are: Jennifer Thorington Springer, "'Roll It Gal:' Alison Hinds, Female Empowerment, and Calypso." *Meridian*. 8:1 (2008): 93–129. Denise Hughes-Tafen. "Women, Theatre and Calypso in the English-speaking Caribbean." *Feminist Review* 84 (2006): 84-104., and Rawwida. Baksh-Soodeen, "Issues of Difference in Contemporary Caribbean Feminism." *Feminist Review* 59 (1998): 74-85.

sexualized objects in music videos. Typical Caribbean music videos feature the scantily-clad, sexually open island woman in a variety of picturesque settings, such as female-populated beaches, all-female carnival bands, and carnival parties. At the same time, videos often portray Caribbean males surrounded by Oriental-style 'harems' of women. Such scenes mirror long-established Western images of the sexualized black female and idyllic vistas of the Caribbean.[75]

As visual technologies have become commonplace tools for the portrayal of Caribbean women, so have advances in musical technology impacted stage performances. Just as Lord Shorty used the latest musical tools available in the 1970s, so too does contemporary soca use emerging technologies to change the sound and speed of soca. Prior to the 1990s soca performers primarily used live bands on stage. The 1990s ushered in the use of prerecorded music and synthesized sounds.[76] Faster tempos also defined the new "jump and wave" movement, led by Trinidadian Super Blue with his 1991 hit "Jump and Wave." This period also saw a higher frequency of regional tours, as soca performers traveled to Caribbean countries that celebrated carnival. Stage shows also became more theatrical, with choreography and more prominent use of female dancers enhancing live performances. Trinidad even created a national soca contest equivalent to the calypso competitions, with slightly different criteria: Soca Monarch and International Soca Monarch.

The 21st century ushered in a more global and transnational era for soca. With the music's appeal no longer confined to the Caribbean, soca artists now perform worldwide.

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75 Veronica Marie Gregg, *Caribbean Women: An Anthology of Non-Fiction Writing, 1890 – 1980* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2005).
[76] See Curwen Best, "Technology Constructing Culture" at 29.

Essentially, wherever there are diasporic Caribbean people, there will be soca performers. Their audience is now both Caribbean and transnational Caribbean-identified, and this change has affected the musical content, lyrics, and visual modes of their songs and performances. Technology plays an even greater role for contemporary performers, as the industry expects them to reach a broader audience beyond the Caribbean. Soca performers have fully embraced the available technology, creating ever more frantic tempos, a trend led by performers such as Machel Montano and his band, The HD Family. Concurrently, more soca artists perform more often in Global North countries. These developments are consistent with neoliberal imperatives, which extol the virtues of entrepreneurship and posit the market as the ultimate determinant of the value of commodified cultural products. Soca performers are now essentially small business owners, working in the global market as entrepreneurs. They are the updated versions of international calypsonian entertainers such as Roaring Lion and Sparrow, hosting their own websites and selling mp3s of their songs and tickets to their concerts.

The increasing prominence of women on the global soca stage further complicates the music's transnational popularity. Any thoughtful analysis of soca lyrics performed by women will reveal the sexist themes of most instructive soca records, in which the singer tells the audience how to perform movements appropriate to the songs. Instruction songs were primarily non-gendered in the 1980s and 1990s, but by the early 2000s they began to specifically target women's bodies (especially their posteriors). Through the analysis of three songs by female soca artists from St. Lucia, this dissertation explores how female soca performers lyrically respond to a field where such sexual instructions are the norm.

CONSTRAINTS OF THIS DISSERTATION

Information on Trinidadian calypso abounds, as it has been a subject of study for calypso scholars since the 1970s; but this is not the case for St. Lucia. Much of the relevant information on St. Lucia's musical and economic history is unavailable in the U.S.; some materials are accessible only in the island, and some have been lost. Nevertheless, I have collected all the available information on St. Lucia's musical history from primary sources such as local newspapers, government documents, and online resources from Youtube videos to individual websites.

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

Chapter 1: The Rise of Carnival and Calypso in St. Lucia

This chapter contextualizes the issues inherent in creating a St. Lucian music industry. Using scholarly texts and news articles, it charts the rise of state-sanctioned calypso within the socio-political and historical context of the late-19th and early-20th centuries. This chapter corrects longstanding assumptions that readily brand St. Lucia's Carnival music as identical to Trinidadian calypso. One important difference is the integral part St. Lucian women played in the organization of Carnival as organizers of the St. Lucia Carnival Queen Show. It was through the Queen Show that calypso drew the attention first of St. Lucia's upper classes, then the rest of the nation. This history differs sharply from Trinidad's, which documents Carnival festivities dating back to the 18th century. This chapter details the rise of the calypso broadly through the 1980s, and offers an overview of early St. Lucian calypso starting in the mid-1960s. It also locates Caribbean decolonization as the backdrop to calypso's rise on the national stage, and the

disparate issues of class, language, and other issues that informed which calypsos judges selected as representative of nationalist concerns.

Chapter 2: Language and Gender Power Plays in St. Lucia

This chapter explores the power dynamics of language and gender in St. Lucian calypso, as these later informed the sexual politics of soca. It historicizes soca's origins in 1970s Trinidad, and its migration and adoption into St. Lucian society. It acknowledges Trinidad as the first Caribbean island to embrace the regional and global commodification of calypso, while contextualizg the different, and slower, development of St. Lucian calypso. One key difference in St. Lucian calypso is the historic tension between British English and French Kwéyòl, which impacted every aspect of St. Lucian life, and particularly the public performances and personas of its calypsonians. Another element unique to St. Lucia was the gendered roles assumed by folk singers, which differed sharply from Trinidad's calypsonian norms. In short, the language (British English) and male-centeredness of Trinidadian calypso made it difficult for Francophone St. Lucians, especially women, to fully embrace it.

Chapter 3: The Rise of Women in St. Lucian Soca

This chapter investigates the lyrical response of St. Lucian soca artists to assumed dichotomy of either singing of women's issues or singing of anti-female sentiments in instructive soca songs. After an overview of Caribbean feminism and scholarship on representations of women in calypso, this chapter traces the broadening of themes covered by female soca artists in St. Lucia through the lyrics of three songs by prominent St. Lucian female performers from different eras in the music's development: Agnes Lewis (aka Black Pearl), Nicole 'Nicki' David, and Melissa Moses (aka Q-PID). The

analysis for each considers the impact of multiple factors, including language, socioeconomic status, the artists' respective biographies, their physical appearance, and their use (or not) of emerging technologies. The goal of each analysis is to reveal how these and other factors affect the artist's viability in local, regional, and global markets. The focus on lyrics provides further insight into how female soca artists present themselves and their songs in response to their audience's internalized gender norms, a cultural tightrope that can determine a song's—and its performer's—future prospects.

Chapter 4: Lyrically Speaking – Soca and Women

This chapter highlights women's more prominent role in lyrical content, stage and video performances at the turn of the 21st century, due to soca's shift toward a larger diasporic audience. Although heterosexual males still dominate soca, more women perform the music today than ever before. This chapter charts the emergence of gendered instructional lyrics in soca from the 1990s to the early 21st century, by exploring popular socas by prominent male performers (Super Blue, Nigel and Martin, Machel Montano and Bunji Garlin). It then compares these records to popular soca songs by well-known female performers during the same period. Throughout, the chapter links examples of gendered lyrics of popular socas to major economic changes within the Caribbean and beyond, emphasizing the growing focus on monetizing the female body in a variety of ways.

CHAPTER 1. THE RISE OF CARNIVAL AND CALYPSO IN ST. LUCIA

> May I remind you that for us in the Caribbean, Carnival is a concatenation of things – it is movement, it is colour, it is food, it is drink, it is fete, it is feast, it is ritual, it is celebration, it is what keeps BWIA flying, it is foreign exchange, it is a harbinger of blessings and woes. So, for us in the Caribbean, there can only be an arid education, no centre of development, no holistic schooling or training without directional focus on the annual Carnival Bands. … Carnival must be seen as the rhythm of our development
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> – Hollis "Chalkdust" Liverpool.[77]

INTRODUCTION

Like most other Anglophone Caribbean islands, St. Lucia has a yearly Carnival, and has had one for as long as most St. Lucians can remember. An accompaniment to Carnival is Carnival musics, labelled calypso for the last half of the 20th century. The two activities are intertwined to the extent that to speak of Carnival is to speak of calypso. And up until the late 1970s, to speak of calypso was to speak about the men who sang

[77] Hollis "Chalkdust" Liverpool, "Dr. Eric Williams' Vision for the Development of Carnival," *Music, Memory, Resistance,* ed. Paquet et al. (2007), 3-1.

'real caiso,' who all just happen to be Trinidadian, naturalized, born, or adopted.[78] Calypsonians speak on behalf of the common man, and calypso songs often refer to politics, social strife, and issues that prey on the minds of the public. Even after the more 'jumpy' or 'party' calypsos separated from calypso generally and became soca, Carnival music remained primarily a male-dominated space. However, in the last 30 years, women have slowly made inroads into Carnival music, both in calypso and the newer soca. Now, in the early 21st century, women more commonly take front stage as singers in their own right in both calypso and soca.

I wondered why this was not so before and why it is so now, which led me to doing more research, leading to surprising results. My findings reveal that many calypso scholars document Trinidad calypso as an integral part of Carnival (in various forms) since the 1850s, sung by both women and men while both women and men participated in stickfighting.[79] If so, something must have happened since then to so completely

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[78] Calypso enthusiasts differentiate between calypso and 'real caiso' in St. Lucia. These enthusiasts agree with Daniel J. Crowley's definition of 'real caiso' as calypso as "the Carnival songs of Trinidad, composed and sung by one of a group of about fifty professional singers or "calypsonians" in temporary theatres called 'tents' during the Carnival season. Subjects are usually topical, about local events or local attitudes toward foreign events; derision, allusion, and double entendre are often employed. Calypsos may also function as tributes to famous people, as black-mail, as political electioneering, as 'singing commercials,' and as love songs. The words tend to take precedence over the music." See "Toward a Definition of Calypso (Part 11)," *Ethnomusicology*. 3: 3 (1959): 117-24 at 120-21). When calypsonians perform songs with match this definition, the audience expresses their appreciation by saying "*bon* caiso"/ good caiso. It is worthwhile to note that Crowley also points to the varying words used for this music prior to the 1930s: *cariso*, *caliso*, *kaiso*, and *caiso*. Trinidadian calypso is prized over local Carnival songs to the extent that Crowley explains that "[i]n rural St. Lucia there exist many topical 'caliso' songs made up by nonprofessional musicians and sung in Creole, although their existence has been denied in the literature." "Toward a Definition of Calypso (Part 11)," 118. Some accepted singers of 'real caiso' are Chalkdust, Kitchener, Red Plastic Bag and Sparrow.

[79] Pamela R. Franco reports that, contrary to popular beliefs, many Trinidadian women and men participating in the Jammette Carnival of the late 1900s both took part in stickfighting and sang 'carisos': "the majority of women who frequently identified as stickfighters were actually women in the *jamet* class who hung around calenda yards as *chantwelles* or singers, 'nurses' to take care of the wounded, or as wives or lovers of male stickfighters" ("The 'Unruly Woman' in Nineteenth-Century Trinidad Carnival," *Small Axe*. 7 (2000):60-76 at 71). Stickfighting, because of its violent nature, was largely assumed to be done by men. The women were assumed to only serve as onlookers and not people who egged on the fighting and

exclude women. In Trinidad, one condition that led to calypso becoming a male only space was the banning of stickfighting.[80] In St. Lucia it was the importation of the Trinidad styled calypso in the 1940s, which by that time, was a male centered genre. In an effort to mimic 'true' caiso, St. Lucians also adopted the male only rules, at odds with more egalitarian St. Lucian French Kwéyòl music conventions where women were the main singers. Moreover, calypso lyrics were sung in British English for British and U.S. tourists at hotels, and not for the French Kwéyòl speaking St. Lucian public, creating a linguistic interpretation problem for locals.

In researching, I found that gender and language issues form the basis of difference between Trinidadian and St. Lucian calypso, which later impacted St. Lucian calypso's acceptance by St. Lucians. Therefore, in this dissertation I explore: (1) the role of St. Lucian women in calypso and soca; (2) images of Caribbean women that are prevalent in the lyrical narratives of calypso and soca; and (3) the prevalent portrayal of Caribbean women by male and female calypso and soca performers in the 21st century.

To begin this exploration I compare the Carnival and calypso histories of the islands of St. Lucia and Trinidad, and to speak of calypso, Carnival *must* be included. Knowing the history of an island's Carnival is necessary because, as the islands of the Caribbean become more comfortable with their independence/limited sovereignty, their citizens seek to document and discuss cultural heritage in a number of fields, including Carnival musics. A look at the scholarly literature on calypso reveals a heavy bias with

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participated in it. However, Franco redefines this idea by delving into newspaper articles which identified women, by name, as stickfighters. Though her wording in this sentence seems to insinuate that being a stickfighter may be what led to these women to be singers, the rest of her article does not bear this out.

[80] See: Christine G. T. Ho "Popular Culture and the Aestheticization of Politics: Hegemonic Struggle and Postcolonial Nationalism in the Trinidad Carnival," *Transforming Anthropology*. 9.1 (2000): 3-18.

respect to Trinidad as the 'land of calypso.' Trinidadian calypsonian Roaring Lion "gave Trinidad and Tobago its sobriquet 'land of Calypso' when asked by US President Roosevelt 'where are you from?' after a command performance'" (1).[81] And the moniker remains a point of departure for many who study calypso which means that such studies are primarily in the Trinidadian context..[82] The very necessary research on Trinidadian calypso, to the exclusion of calypso from most other islands, leads to generalizations about Trinidadian calypso overlaid on that of other Caribbean islands. Therefore, little or no research is deemed necessary on calypso in other islands.

The result of this focus on Trinidad is that scholars continually reference Trinidad's history as definitive of all other Anglophone Caribbean territories, instead of researching each island's calypso history. Trinidad's history, disseminated to the population of these other islands through public lectures, radio programmes, television panels, and other avenues where scholars speak of calypso and its history, is difficult to resist. This history then replaces or recasts each island's history, while simultaneously homogenizing calypso and Carnival history and experience to mirror a "Trinidadian" one.

Such is the case with the small island of St. Lucia. As a St. Lucian, I have been exposed to Carnival and calypso all of my life. And as an international student in the United States among other non-St. Lucian students, it was around calypso that we

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[81] Guilbault, *Governing Sound,* 1.

[82] Crowley, when speaking later about the introduction of calypso to the St. Lucian public said, "Others such as Invader, Melody, Sparrow, Panther, and Spoiler have toured extensively. Trinidad calypsos have been collected from Bahamian Out Islanders who preserved even the voice ornament of Kitch, but could not explain the Trinidad allusions in the text. Similarly, Creole-speaking St. Lucians sing the English lyrics without consideration of their source or meaning. The songs collected in St. John, Virgin Islands, by Miss Lamson are overwhelming of known Trinidadian origin, as are the texts she analyses," "Toward a Definition of Calypso (Part II)," 118.

bonded, calypso from different islands but primarily from Trinidad. And even those calypsos which were not from Trinidad were primarily in the Trinidadian style. So when, as a graduate student, I decided to research women in soca for my Master's thesis, I did not find it strange that most of the articles and books referenced Trinidad, because I had been brought up with the idea that Trinidadian calypso was the standard and that the histories of most of the other islands were the same anyway. So, to *me* Trinidad's calypso history was the same as St. Lucia's.

But these ideas changed when I decided to carry out my dissertation on the role of St. Lucian women in soca. I discovered significant differences between St. Lucian and Trinidadian, which has much to do with the history of how calypso music and Carnival developed in each island.[83] From 1966 to the present, the discussion of Carnival and calypso has been dominated by discussions of Trinidad, with few exceptions from Barbados and Antigua. From calypso's history to the 'races' who sung calypso, to

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[83] Calypso information tended to be based on the history of calypso in Trinidad. See for example: : Jacob Delworth Elder, "Evolution of the Trinidadian Calypso of Trinidad and Tobago: A Socio-historical Analysis of Song-change" by (Unpublished Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1966), Raymond Quevedo, *Atilla's Kaiso: A Short History of Trinidad Calypso* by (St. Augustine, Trinidad and Tobego: University of the West Indies Press, 1983), Susan Campbell, "Carnival, Calypso, and Class Struggle in Nineteenth Century Trinidad," *History Workshop*. 26 (1988): 1-27; Douglas Midgett, "Cricket and Calypso: Cultural Representations and Social History in the West Indies, *Sport in Society*. 6.2-3 (2003): 239-68; Rohlehr, *Calypso and Society in Pre-independence Trinidad* (1990); David V. Trotman, "The Image of Indians in Calypso: Trinidad 1946-86," *Indenture and Exile: The Indo-Caribbean Experience*, ed. Frank Birbalsingh (Toronto: TSAR, 1989), 176-90 and "'Performing the History: Contesting Historical Narratives in Trinidad and Tobago," *Canadian Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies/Revue Canadienne des Études Latino-Américaines et Caraïbes*. 32.63 (2007): 73-109; Liverpool, *Rituals of Power and Rebellion*(2001). On gender issues were the performers from different islands are treated the same, see: Belinda Edmondson, "Public Spectacles: Caribbean Women and the Politics of Public Performance," *Small Axe*. 7.1 (2003): 1-16; Denise Hughes-Tafen, "Women, Theatre and Calypso in the English-Speaking Caribbean," *Feminist Review* 84 (2006): 84-104; Kevin Frank ,"Female Agency and Oppression in Caribbean Bacchanalian Culture: Soca, Carnival and Dancehall," *Women's Studies Quarterly*. 35. 1/2 (2007): 179-90l; Rhonda Reddock, ed. *Interrogating Caribbean Masculinities: Theoretical and Emprirical Analyses* (Mona, Jamaica: University of the West Indies Press, 2000). and more recently: Jennifer Thorington Springer, "'Roll It Gal': Alison Hinds, Female Empowerment and Calypso," *Meridian*. 8:1 (2008): 93–129.

gendered aspects of calypso performances, Trinidad is at the center. Therefore, a St. Lucian scholar like myself had little scholarly documentation when discussing Carnival musics of St. Lucia, and even less on women in soca. I therefore sought to do some of what other calypso scholars had done: mine local newspapers for information to construct a history of St. Lucian calypso.

But looking to the newspapers produced issues. In the absence of scholarly information about St. Lucia's Carnival I sought news articles from the early 20th century about Carnival and calypso. I learned that, although much of the last 15 years of news articles are archived online, articles published prior to the 1990s are still only in hard copy. Further, Carnival, touted as a huge national festival and extolled as part of our St. Lucian (and Caribbean) identity, was absent from our national newspaper until the 1950s, which begs the question of "why"? To answer that question, I first piece together a history of St. Lucian Carnival, and then explain why the St. Lucian Carnival Queen Show occupies the heart of both St. Lucian Carnival and calypso. Moreover, I explain how scholarly documentation of Trinidad's Carnival aided in obfuscating the history of St. Lucia's Carnival and calypso to more closely resemble Trinidad's. Finally, I connect Carnival activities to the economic welfare of St. Lucia.

CARNIVAL IN ST. LUCIA

What little academic documentation exists of St. Lucian Carnival prior to the 1960s begins with ethnomusicologist Daniel J. Crowley's visit to St. Lucia in 1954. What little we know about Carnival in the mid-1900s appears in Crowley's "Festivals of the Calendar in St. Lucia," in which he records the national festivals throughout St. Lucia's

calendar year. Crowley also observes that each festival is accompanied by music provided by local groups. For Carnival, he establishes its link to the Catholic liturgical calendar, reporting that its start on "the weekend before Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent, is in its present form a recent importation from Trinidad."[84] Here begins Crowley's constant comparison between St. Lucian Carnival and that of Trinidad. His emphasis on St. Lucia~~n~~'s "present form" being "a recent importation from Trinidad" implies that it was different prior to this. How different he does not say, so it is impossible to ascertain how St. Lucian Carnival compared to Trinidad's before this point. He then tries to construct a history of Carnival of St. Lucia in a few lines:

> In the distant past Carnival was celebrated with masque dances, street masking, and floats on carriages, wagons, or trucks. Music was provided by string bands or by beating biscuit tins. In the 1920's there was a mythical Carnival King called 'Va val' and a Queen was chosen in a contest, but in the last thirty years observance of Carnival had become desultory, and the old forms of masque almost extinct.[85]

From this excerpt we can ascertain only that there *was* Carnival in St. Lucia, with much emphasis on dances and music in a variety of forms. Musicians performed for an audience and revellers used household implements to make 'noise,' as Jacques Attalidefines music in his seminal work, *Noise.*[86] Crowley also names "a mythical Carnival King called 'Va val' and a Queen [who] was chosen in a contest." How this

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[84] Crowley, "Festivals" 112.
[85] Crowley, "Festivals" 113.
[86] See the section "The Sounds of Power," in Jacques Attali, *Noise: The Political Economy of Music,* trans. Brian Massumi, Theory and History of Literature 16 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985), 6-12.

mythical Carnival King is chosen and what he does is not revealed. The Queen is apparently chosen via a contest, but her role is also not stated. With this minimal information, it is unclear how popular the celebration of Carnival was, considering how many other festivals, such as the flower festivals of La Rose and La Marguerite, were more widespread and popular.[87] Therefore, it is confusing how Crowley could then make the observation that "in the last thirty years observance of Carnival had become desultory, and the old forms of masque almost extinct." How has it become 'desultory'? What indicates this? And since he gives few examples of 'masques,' what is his point of comparison to make it 'almost extinct'?

This brief history of St. Lucian Carnival prior to the 1950s, though it does offer offer some description of Carnival before the Trinidadian 'importation,' is difficult to use as a point of comparison because of Trinidad's extensive scholarship. It is almost as if Crowley had already made the assumption that the history of St. Lucian Carnival was the same as that of Trinidad, and so only made cursory forays into St. Lucia's Carnival history.

To find answers to the questions that Crowley's brief history of St. Lucian Carnival left, and to gain a fuller view of St. Lucian Carnival celebrations prior to the 1950s, I turned to St. Lucia's oldest newspaper, *The Voice of St. Lucia*. As an important social event, Carnival did not get into the national newspaper until 28th February, 1954 in the article "St. Lucians Stand Ready for Jour Vert Ole Mask: 'Queen' to be chosen at

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[87] Though Crowley spends at least half a page speaking of carnival in St. Lucia, he does point to the fact that the flower festival societies of St. Lucia (La Rose and La Marguerite) have a stronger foothold on the society since "organizations still exist in each village" ("Festivals," 119). While these festivals have a following in each village (to this day), carnival's following is much more spotty with most of its revellers living in Castries or Vieux-Fort.

Palm Beach Tonight" by a "Voice Staff Writer."[88] The headline exclaims, "Tonight, tomorrow and Tuesday King Carnival, monarch of merrymaking, gaiety and hilarity will ascend the throne for his annual two-day reign." This appears to be a reference to Crowley's King of Va Val and gives a vague context for his role. From this description, King Carnival engages in all manner of frivolity with impunity during Carnival Monday and Tuesday. He is expected to essentially have fun, party, and be of good cheer for those two days. How he is picked is not referenced, nor his role in the Carnival festival. Is he there to show the 'spirit' of Carnival reigning supreme?

Although these articles give some inkling as to the origins of St. Lucian Carnival, they are incomplete. In "Carnival – Biggest Bacchanal,"[89] Eric Branford weaves an interesting tale of the origins of Carnival, the change in Carnival instruments and how Jour Ouvert is celebrated in St. Lucia. He waxes poetic on the Latin derivation of the word as a "farewell to flesh" connecting it to:

> A Roman pagan custom over three thousand years ago; during the worship of their God Saturn, the Roman slaves were free to ridicule their masters, hard feelings were smothered by an exchange of presents, feasting and dancing was the order of the day. After Pagan Rome converted to Christianity, Carnival continued.
>
> The custom of Carnival was brought into the Caribbean by the Spanish and French; here again we see slaves taking part in Carnival as

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[88] **"**Staff Writer," "St Lucians Stand Ready for Jour Vert Ole Mask: 'Queen' to be chosen at Palm Beach Tonight.' *The Voice of St. Lucia.* [Castries, St. Lucia], 28 Feb, 1954.

[89] Of note here is that Branford is a bandleader. Eric Branford, "Carnival Biggest Bacchanal." *The Voice of St. Lucia*. [Castries, St. Lucia] 19 Feb 1966:

> allowed by the Romans. They made jokes of their masters, caricature current affairs picong and jibes all part of the tradition. Carnival seasons were characterised by gaiety, comic buffoonery and the splendour of costumes.[90] (Branford)

Branford clearly shows his Classical education by invoking the Latin roots of the word Carnival. He then explains his belief that the tradition of Carnival crossed over to the Caribbean from Europeans of Spanish and French descent, who came to the Caribbean to seek their fortune and made their homes in the Caribbean. However, his assertion that Caribbean slaves were allowed to join in this revelry may be erroneous as it would have been based on the information available at the time. Scholars have now realized that slaves in Trinidad were actually not allowed to participate in Carnival. In fact, Carnival and the parties that surrounded it were exclusively the purview of the white upper classes and the few artisans of mixed race they graciously allowed to attend.[91] The masses only started "playing mas" post-emancipation.[92] The former slaves appropriated as much of the customs of the upper class as they could, and participating in Carnival was one of those significant customs. As a result of the chaos that ensued with untold numbers of now free men and women swarming the streets, the white upper classes and the moneyed

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[90] Branford, "Carnival – Biggest Bacchanal." *The Voice of St. Lucia*. [Castries, St. Lucia] 19 Sat. 1966.
[91] Susan Campbell revels how Carnival was celebrated in Trinidad prior to Emancipation. She explains that Carnival was not always celebrated by all classes of people in Trinidad, but that it was initially for the rich landed white class and those who they felt inspired to invite: "In Trinidad during slavery it was whites who had celebrated Carnival from Christmas until Ash Wednesday with genteel house-to-house visiting en masque, street promenading, dancing, and playing practical jokes. Free blacks, while excluded from participation in these activities, were allowed to mask; not so the slaves, who were completely ostracized from Carnival. Not surprisingly, when - following Emancipation - they had the freedom to do so, the ex-slaves returned Carnival to its roots, transforming it into their celebration and ending its domination by the 'respectable', white or black" ("Carnival, Calypso," 9).
[92] Campbell, "Carnival, Calypso" 9.

artisans refused to participate in Carnival. Moreover, the upper classes were very disturbed by the way the former slave populace depicted them and decried Carnival inclusive of these newly freed people as 'Jammette Carnival,' a Carnival peopled by prostitutes and bad johns who made up the lowest elements of society.[93] Essentially, the "jokes … [about the former] masters, caricature[s] current [and past] affairs [together with] picong and jibes [were definitely not seen as] all part of the tradition" of Carnival.[94]

It is difficult not to think that similar developments occurred in St. Lucia, which shares with Trinidad very similar social stratification as well as a history of British and French rule. And like Trinidad, St. Lucia has a history of reprisals against the poor by the rich, which may have led to St Lucian Carnival always being "characterised by gaiety, comic buffoonery and the splendour of costumes," even while each year there is an 'artful' admonition to abstain from "lewdness and vulgarity … [an] unfortunate tendency … held by many people that they can abandon their moral standards, just because it is carnival" and instead have a "clean" carnival.[95] Here, in a *Voice* Editorial, the embrace of European social norms by St. Lucian elite is clear. Using coded language, this editorial admonishes revelers to be the happy natives/locals engaging in "gaiety, comic buffoonery and the splendor of cosumes." But then also warns revelers to engage only in morally "clean" behaviour instead of "lewdness and vulgarity," a charge usually levelled at poor women. Just as in Trinidad, even in Carnival revelry the rich and wealthy are assumed to be higher moral standards during this time of "letting go."

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[93] See above in the Introduction for a fuller discussion on Trinidad's "Jammette" Carnival and Pearse, "Carnival in the Nineteenth Century Trinidad," 180.
[94] Branford, Eric. "Carnival — Biggest Bacchanal."
[95] Editorial. "Be Merry but Make it Clean." *The Voice of St. Lucia*. [Castries, St. Lucia] 8 Feb. 1964.

Starting his article as an historical account of St. Lucian Carnival with references to Roman customs, Branford shifts tone to wax poetic about what St. Lucian Carnival celebrations were like prior to the 1950s. He seems to take much liberty here in creating a peaceful, sanitized, idyllic series of images of Jour Ouvert, which is at odds with the even more organized and peaceful St. Lucian Jour Ouvert celebrated in the 1980s, when I grew up:

> The famous bamboo tambo, bottle and spoon and shell bands, now long dead, still awakens many memories. Thousands sang and jumped to the harmonising and rhythmical tunes emerging from the bottle and spoons (while sport – whole sport). The bamboo tambo, for carnival road march, and bottle and spoon for carnival parties. Bamboo tambo is dead. **Long live the steel band.** [emphasis in original] This most popular musical product of the West Indies. Steelbands[96] emerged from old pots and pans, dust bins and bamboo to well the turned oil drums.[97]

In this news story, Branford details the celebration of St. Lucian Carnival before the advent of the steelbands. He explains that the revellers made up the musicians *and* the bands. He alludes to the ragtag nature of the Jour Ouvert bands consisting primarily of revellers.[98] Jour Ouvert revellers celebrated with implements that were handy at the time:

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[96] Winer, *Dictionary* defines "steelband" as a "precussion orchestra" (849-50 at 849) composed of drum made from the 55 U.S. gallon drums in which oil products were shipped. Such a drum is called a steel pan." The instument is a "steep pan" (850).

[97] Branford, "Carnival – Biggest Bacchanal."

[98] The change that Branford charts here emphasizes Attali's assertion that once the circumstances surrounding the creation of music change, the music itself changes (*Noise,* 5). Here, the move from bottle and spoon, tamboo bamboo, etc. to steelpan marks a change from carnival music being a communal experience where revelers are at once musicians to an experience where revelers are separate from musical performers.

empty glass bottles to play percussion when hit with spoons, and conch shell bands that made use of being in an island where fishing was a common form of livelihood. The ingrained response to follow the sound of conch shells, created in communities where fishermen would blow on a conch shell to signal the arrival of a fresh haul of fish, made the conch a perfect musical instrument for Carnival.

It was therefore not surprising that Carnival revelers conscripted conch shells for waking the community on Jour Ouvert morning, as well as utilizing it as the main musical instrument in some Jour Ouvert bands. In concert with the sound of the conch shell was that of the bamboo tambo, a segment of bamboo through which length of rope was threaded through and tied. Individuals then placed the cord around their necks and used a stick to "beat" a rhythm on the length of bamboo in the fashion of a drum. This sharp sound created a welcome accompaniment for other local musical equipment, lending a sense of camaraderie and joy to the Jour Overt celebrations.

Branford's liberties start with his claim that the participants were "harmonising" with their home-made musical equipment and his glorification of the steelpan as an important Caribbean commodity. Even as the time of day that Jour Ouvert was celebrated and the musical instruments used were correct, Branford makes the scene so idyllic that anyone reading this article who knew anything about Jour Ouvert would query his description of the music during this period. By using the word harmonising he implies the sound produced was mellow, similar to sounds produced when a choir master was directing a choir. However, with drunk revelers coming from parties, the musical sounds produced are more cacophonous than harmonising. Additionally, this harmonising

negates the physical violence which commonly occurs during Jour Ouvert, which calls for a highly visible police presence.

Branford also extols the virtues of the steelpan, not as a good musical instrument, but as the "most popular musical product of the West Indies." After rhapsodizing about the local musical instruments to the point of naming each one, it is a bit strange then to extol the virtues of an imported musical instrument that is quite costly to most St. Lucians, both then and now. His turn to extoling the wonders of this instrument, which is not as easily available to all and sundry participating in Jour Ouvert, after saying how wonderful it was for an entire crowd of 'thousands' to 'harmonise', negates his earlier positive statements about the community unity which those local musical instruments engendered.

Moreover, Branford's celebratory "[l]ong live the steel band" emphasizes how easily those with access to a wider audience sloughed off unique aspects of St. Lucian carnival music to wholeheartedly embrace another country's unique contribution to Carnival music: Trinidad's steel drums. In so doing, Branford begins the erasure of St. Lucian Carnival customs and ushers in the adoption of Trinidad's in his very public announcement. While this change in musical technology is not necessarily negative, the result of its use and embrace by the St. Lucian society ultimately leads to St. Lucians 'forgetting' that anything else was used as musical accompaniment during carnival, especially as newspaper articles are soon forgotten, unlike the textbooks published by Trinidadian scholars of Carnival and calypso. In scholarly discussions of cultural issues, newspaper articles do not count as authoritative sources. Instead, textbooks do. The information in those textbooks get printed, taught in schools, and ultimately codified into

Caribbean culture through music and movies with little questioning. And if those textbooks privilege one island's experience because scholarly sources all reference that island, the authoritative scholarship for other islands is assumed to be the same.

Crowley and Branford's attempt to describe St. Lucian Carnival furnishes us with views influenced by their own interests. For a more comprehensive view of the origin and development of St. Lucian Carnival we need to wait until the year of St. Lucia's independence, 1979, and an article written by Euralis Bouty, where she reminisces on the origins of St. Lucian carnival. Miss Euralis T. Bouty was one of the band of women, and men who "organised" St. Lucian Carnival, into what St. Lucians know today. In her autobiographical article "Miss Euralis T. Bouty Looks at Carnival of Long Ago," Bouty clearly articulates hers and others' contribution to St. Lucian Carnival.[99] Writing a two-page spread in *The Voice of St. Lucia* in 1979, she reveals that the origin of St. Lucian Carnival was indeed *similar* to that of Trinidad. She says the first Carnival she attended was while she was a student at the St. Joseph's Convent. It was

> during World War I when the Red Cross Committee organised a garden fete at the Botanical Gardens now known as George the V Park to raise funds to help the war victims. The highlight of the show was a Carnival Pageant which paraded through some of the main streets of Castries and proceeded to the Botanical Gardens to mark the opening of the ceremony.[100]

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[99] Bouty, Euralis T. "Miss Euralis T. Bouty Looks at Carnival Long Ago." *The Voice of St. Lucia*. [Castries, St. Lucia] 4 Feb. 1979: 9. Print.
[100] Bouty. "Miss Euralis T. Bouty" 9.

What Bouty describes here is a carefully crafted show put on by St. Lucian upper classes. The Carnival was under the guise of a 'garden fete,' culminating in a procession to the well-tended Castries Botanical Gardens, all to raise funds for WW I victims, with the central event being the "Carnival Pageant." This information indicates that the entire event was probably organised by wives of well-to-do men in the St. Lucian upper classes. She further comments that the carnival was not held every year, as it was at the time of article's publication.

Then, unlike anyone else who has spoken about St. Lucian Carnival's progression, Bouty names the women, and men, involved in the "organisation" of St. Lucian Carnival. She explains:

> the idea of forming a committee to develop Carnival was suggested. A group comprising Mrs. Clauzel, Mrs. Murray, Mr [sic] and Mrs Warwick Walcott, Mr. Gerald Phillip, Mr. Frank Augier and myself formed the committee and arranged a programme which included a pageant, dances on Shrove Monday and Shrove Tuesday and a half-day picnic on Ash Wednesday. If funds permit. There was no prize giving and no profit making. …When some members passed away or left St. Lucia the interest waned but Carnival still continued with less activity. …In 1949 the St. Lucia Girls Physical Culture Club of which I was a member decided to make Carnival bigger and better. …For the first time in the history of Carnival we had a King and Queen of Carnival. Yolande Clauzel was the Queen and Ornan Monplaisir the King. We also organised the first J'Ouvert. There was a parade of bands from that section of the town now

> known as the William Peter Boulevard to Victoria Park followed by the King and Queen of Carnival, where a prize-giving competition was held.[101]

Although she names men who were part of the group, from the derisive references to the 'girls' who orgainsed Carnival activities in the 1960s we can assume that the women were more involved than the men. The make-up of the committee notwithstanding, this is a much more comprehensive and less idealistic history of St. Lucian Carnival. Moreover, the emphasis on activities which privileged women's organising skills is apparent in the emphasis on "a pageant, dances … [and the involvement of] the St. Lucia Girls Physical Culture Club … [in deciding] to make Carnival bigger and better" in 1949. While she never explains what she meant by making Carnival "bigger and better," the growing popularity of Carnival and its prominence on St. Lucia's social calendar and entrance into the local newspaper seems to indicate what this phrase meant.

Before this article, newspapers identifed neither Bouty, nor any other women, as playing any significant part in the development of St. Lucian Carnival. Her claims are not contradicted but actually supported by long-time Carnival and calypso supporters.[102] That her name comes up nowhere in the coverage of Carnival throughout the 1950s and 1960s is rather unusual because of the major part she played in the establishment of Carnival in

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[101] Bouty. "Miss Euralis T. Bouty" 9.

[102] Since there is no written history of the St. Lucian beauty pageant, Carnival or calypso, I relied on corroboration from St. Lucians engaged in Carnival activities such as Avril Emanus (TOT executive member and former calypso judge), Cecil "Charlo" Charles (TOT manager), Cyril "Get Through" Felix (TOT founder and calypsonian), Allan "Striker" Hippolyte (host of "Talking Calypso"), and George Goddard (calypso songwriter), among others. The Take Over Tent (TOT). TOT, like other calypso tents, is a calypso tent made up of an executive and calypsonians. The executive organizes calypso performances where the calypsonians perform their songs during calypso season. At each show, judges decide which calypsonians are the winners of that night and this goes on (on different nights) until TOT identifies one/more calypsonians who will represent the tent at the national semi-finals and finals.

St. Lucia. The only tangential mention that could have referenced her and the others involved mentioned the "girls" who had organised Carnival, just as the men of the Bandleaders' Association were poised to take over in 1966. Crowley did not mention her, and neither did Branford or the writers of any of the pieces on the Carnival Queen Show or the other aspects of Carnival. I am unsure what this "oversight" points to but it is very strange that one of the main people responsible for the "growth" of St. Lucian Carnival was absent from conversations about it. This information would have been relatively easy to access for Crowley and Branford, since the participants were still alive and engaged in the events. What this may point to is that in St. Lucia, women are not identified as important to national events unless they speak up for themselves, as Bouty had to do.

It is particularly easy to appropriate traditions when they so closely mirror one's own. Similar to Trinidad, St. Lucians celebrate carnival by wearing costumes or "playing masquerade/mas'" on the Monday and Tuesday before Ash Wednesday. Unlike the 21st century's full two-day holiday, in 1954 *The Voice of St. Lucia* reports that: "The majority of stores in Castries will close at 12 noon tomorrow, Carnival Monday in order to allow members of their staff to witness or take part in the carnival pageant sponsored by the St. Lucia Physical Girls Culture Club at the Victoria Park."[103] This tradition of a "half-day off" ensured that employees put in their time at work and could morph into revellers with their change of costumes in the afternoon, ready for the parade and parties to come. Parties organised during Carnival season consistently occurred after local shows heralding Carnival and lasted till morning: "crowds will disperse to the dance halls and

[103] Staff Writer, "St Lucians Stand Ready for Jour Vert Ole Mask."

night-clubs while others will find it more convenient to jump in the streets where the steel-bands and calypsos will reign supreme." Here, St. Lucian's love of partying again resembles Trinidadians'.

As islands with *similar* but not the *same* history of colonization, it is inevitable that each would have identical Carnival aspects, but also aspects that are unique to each. In effect, St. Lucia's version of carnival *does* resemble Trinidad's in many respects: time of year, number of days, types of songs, and the love of carnival parties. Where it deviates is in the role of men and women in the production of carnival activities. Specifically, in planning carnival activities and music competitions, while St. Lucian women were at the forefront, Trinidadian men occupied that position.

THE UNLIKELY LINK BETWEEN ST. LUCIAN CARNIVAL, QUEEN SHOW AND CALYPSO MUSIC

To speak of St. Lucian calypso, the St. Lucian Carnival Queen Show must be part of the conversation. Why? Because it is with the organization of Carnival and the Carnival Queen Show, by a group of St. Lucian women in the 1940s, that calypso was able to obtain a local audience during the competition. [104] Prior to these shows, the broader St. Lucian public had little exposure to calypso music in the Trinidadian style. If not for the St. Lucian Carnival Queen Show, Trinidad-style calypso would not have become as popular as it is now and St. Lucian soca music would be at a much different

[104] St. Lucia is not the only Caribbean island in which women 'organized' the carnival festival. Cynthia Oliver explains that "[i]n St. Croix the Women's League, a group of civic minded community women, took the initiative and were key to the organization of carnival events there" "Winin' Yo' Wais': The Changing Tastes of Dance on the U.S. Virgin Island of St. Croix," *Caribbean Dance from Abakua to Zouk: How Movement Shapes Identity,* ed. Susanna Sloat (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2002). 244-61 at 250. Print.

stage. Essentially, most music sung by St. Lucians prior to the 1950s were in French Kwéyòl, which was most people's first language, as opposed to British English which they spoke and understood, but not as well. In this context, inserting a musical form sung in British English at a national event effectively signaled that the music was for the upper classes who would have been educated in Britain. This conflict set up calypso's struggle to spread to the districts outside of Castries, where the people rejected calypso as an import from Trinidad and non-reflective of St. Lucian life. But calypso *did* signal that St. Lucia's ruling classes were eager for independence and sought to do this by finding common ground with the other British colonies such as Jamaica and Trinidad which fought for, and ultimately, gained independence. Pro-independence supporters from each island used Carnival and calypso as examples of how different their cultures were from Britain when they sought support from their countrymen.

The fact that Crowley's articles are the first scholarly texts on Carnival and Calypso in St. Lucia (even before the pieces in *The Voice of St. Lucia*) exemplify some effects of St. Lucia's desire for independence being concerned with only the economic and not the cultural or social aspects of independent nations in that there is a complete lack of local academic discussion of cultural events like Carnival and Carnival musics. As a result, St. Lucians have to look to Crowley's work, a U.S. citizen, since he was the first to think St. Lucia's cultural habits worthy of academic study. Even as St. Lucia sought to follow Jamaica and Trinidad in their independence goals, local leaders were only interested in sustaining economic stability to the exclusion of a normative St. Lucian

culture.[105] It is only because Jamaica invested in its education system enough to create the University of the West Indies (UWI) facilitating an environment in which such an article could appear, as well as an environment in which journals interrogating Caribbean culture could flourish. In centering independence on only economic issues, St. Lucia developed no avenue to encourage local scholarly discussion on culture, leaving little space outside of local newspapers for cultural issues. The result was that a non-St. Lucian wrote the most widely circulated 20th century article on St. Lucia, instead of a St. Lucian who could imbue more nuance into the cultural documentation, which could inform other St. Lucian scholars. In essence, academic discussion of St. Lucia is still controlled by non-St. Lucian and non-Caribbean scholars.

Crowley reported that Lucians had told him Carnival had become popular about 10 years prior to his 1955 visit. The anonymous writer of a 1959 article in *The St. Lucia Voice* corroborates Crowley's information when s/he writes:

> Carnival as we know it today was started about 1948 by the P.C. Girls Club on a fifty cents per member subscription totalling some fifteen to twenty dollars. Incidentally, some members say they never got their fifty cents back.
>
> Queens were crowned and placed but the P.C. Girls continued to run Carnival even under conditions which would cause the best of friends to fall out.[106]

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[105] Crowley says of the St. Lucian white upper class: "[a]lthough there were 2,198 whites in St. Lucia at the outbreak of the French Revolution in 1789, by 1843 their number had dwindled to 1,039, which is still over twice as many as live in St. Lucia today," today being the mid-1950s ("Festivals," 100).

[106] "Behind the Carnival Mask by Ole Mass 1959." *The Voice of St. Lucia*. [Castries, St. Lucia] 24 Feb. 1959,

While Crowley, an anthropologist, only reports what locals disclosed to him, this local author can give a more complete (though acerbic) history of St. Lucian carnival. Here the organization of carnival "as we know it today" is laid at the feet of some entrepreneurial St. Lucian women who also organized the St. Lucia Carnival Queen Pageant. This makes it clear that Carnival was a business venture where members paid a "subscription," similar to any start-up company with investors. The paid subscription puts the beginning of St. Lucia's carnival squarely in the realm of capitalism. Hence, in the history of St. Lucian Carnival, as we know it today, there was no singing in the cane fields using music to revolt against the overseers and colonial authorities; there was instead a group of entrepreneurial women (with a few men who were not implied here) organizing young women to participate in an acceptable pageant using a pre-existing event, carnival.

The centrality of women to St. Lucia's carnival is apparent in the amount of information furnished about the Carnival Queen Show vs the King of Carnival. A staff writer in *The Voice* effusively reports that the "grandest show of the carnival [occurs] [w]hen a 'Queen' to reign over the two day festival will be chosen at the Palm Beach Aquatic Club from among six vivacious damsels."[107] This article is not so much about the Carnival itself, but about the Carnival Queen Show that served as a platform for Carnival to occupy such a prominent place in St. Lucia's social calendar. In so doing, this writer highlights the expected place of women in St. Lucian Carnival: the center of Carnival celebrations. This article, and others published throughout the 1950s and 1960s, refute

[107] Source: Staff Writer, "St Lucians Stand Ready for Jour Vert Ole Mask: 'Queen' to be chosen at Palm Beach Tonight.' *The Voice of St. Lucia.* NA 1954: NA. Print.

Crowley's assumption that the King Carnival was actually the pivot around which the rest of the carnival activities revolve. More importantly, this article shows that St. Lucia's Carnival history deviated in important ways from Trinidad's – especially in the centrality of St. Lucian women to the organization of 'carnival as we know it.'

Realizing the centrality of women in the organization of St. Lucian Carnival is important because it explains why Carnival and the Carnival Queen Pageant have been so intertwined in St. Lucia. It also corrects Crowley's impression in his next article (1957) that "[t]he reign of 'Vaval,' King of Carnival, is celebrated with an elaborate beauty queen contest and expensively costumed 'historical' bands in the Trinidad pattern."[108] Here, again we see assumptions about the role of men in social events, as well as assumptions based on the dominance of Trinidadian customs being better known. Crowley assumes that the beauty queen contest celebrated the reign of the Va'val, which is patently untrue as during the Carnival season, calypso was an addendum to the Queen Show.

Calypso (or caliso[109]) was actually a performance in the list of acts surrounding the Queen Show. The first time Carnival becomes worthy of mention in *The Voice of St. Lucia* is in 1957. However, carnival itself is not mentioned. What *is* given much space is

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[108] Crowley, "Song and Dance" 12.

[109] Although St. Lucians refer to the songs sung during carnival as 'calypsos', Crowley calls them 'calisos'. In so doing, he locates St. Lucian carnival songs as older versions of Trinidadian carnival songs. See: Crowley. "Song and Dance." Later in trying to define calypso he uses Trinidad as the model and references historical information of the late 1800s which struggles with what to call the music sung during Carnival. He then historically organizes the carnival music as beginning with caliso, then cariso, and getting to the more evolved calypso. See Daniel J. Crowley, "Toward a Definition of Calypso (Part I)," *Ethnomusicology*. 3. 2 (1959): 57-66. Winer, *Dictionary* under "Cariso" (171) restricts the meaning of the term to erotic songs sing by woment at the stck fights and masquarades in the nineteenth century and as such a precursor to calypso. The tem appears to have no relevance to St. Lucian traditions.

the beauty pageant held the weekend before Carnival Monday and Tuesday (the two days before Ash Wednesday). The article consists primarily of four headshots of the contestants with a caption reading “Mirror, Mirror, on the Wall . . . . . Four of the Contestants” (See Figure 1). Under each caption is the name of the company that the contestant represents: Miss Minville and Chastanet Ltd., Miss. Barnard Sons & Co., Miss. Peter & Co. Ltd., and Miss. Imperial Cigarettes. Even then, as British colonial subjects, the contestants all were very Eurocentric in their appearance. They all had long hair, were very fair, had straight noses and wore identical hairstyles with straightened hair. So here, at the beginning of the recorded history of St. Lucia’s Carnival celebrations, it is literally the face of women representing it to the public, and the Queen Show was the main draw to Carnival celebrations before the actual two day jump-up, not calypso.

Figure 1: St. Lucia's Carnival Queens (1957)

It is also instructive to observe what Crowley pens about St. Lucian “caliso”:

> St. Lucian topical songs, both traditional and improvised, are called caliso, and are similar in form to the one- or two-line Trinidad

patois calypsoes [sic] of fifty years ago. The words are highly allusive, and are sung over and over again to an easily remembered melody.… Sometimes a single melody is used for several different sets of words. The caliso ‘Madiana,’ named for the beach and nightclub in Martinique, has almost the status of St. Lucia’s national anthem. When played at the New Year's morn dances, it signals the ‘breakaway,’ when each dancer breaks away from his partner and dances an ecstatic individual dance while repeating over and over again with the band the lines:

Woy, Madiana,	Oh Madiana,
Ju a ka uvè, lajè mwẽ	Day is breaking, let me go
Mwẽ ka-alé a kay Mama mwẽ.	I will go to my mother's house.
Ju a ka uvè, lajè mwẽ.	Day is breaking, let me go.

One particular caliso usually becomes the favorite of each carnival season. 1955 saw the revival of a ten-year-old caliso about a man who was tricked by a friend into thinking the Devil was after him. He is supposed to have run down the street shouting ‘Dèmu dèyè mwè’ (‘The Devil is behind me’). The first prize in the 1956 carnival competition was won by one Orlix with an English caliso modelled on current Trinidadian forms, commenting on a recent rum bonding scandal:

Some say they don't know at all
Some say it was just *bòbòl* (“graft”)
But what I would like to know is

How the cask get out of the Government bondhouse?[110]

Again, it is obvious that Crowley's familiarity with Trinidadian calypso heavily influences his interpretation of St. Lucian calypso. In making St. Lucia more easily relatable/understandable to readers, who he assumes would be more familiar with Trinidad, Crowley identifies the similarities between St. Lucian and Trinidadian calypso, casting St. Lucia as the "follower." At the same time he states that St. Lucian calypso is "similar in form to the one- or two-line Trinidad patois calypsoes [sic] of fifty years ago," he also references that "[t]he first prize in the 1956 carnival was won by one Orlix with an English caliso modelled on current Trinidadian forms." By stating the former, Crowley pronounces that St. Lucian calypso is 50 years "behind" the calypso of Trinidad, while in the latter he identifies similarity with current Trinidadian calypso trends.

In this final quote Crowley reveals how much impact Trinidadian calypso had on St. Lucian calypso and points to the status that the performers with a good command of English had access to: approval from St. Lucian British colonial elites, who often made up the main audience at the Carnival Queen Pageants. Although Crowley gives no information on the competition where this King was chosen, his blithe use of Trinidad as the standard for calypso may show his own assumptions, or the opinions of those whom he interviewed, that St. Lucia was definitely following Trinidad's example, intimating that it was entirely derivative of Trinidad's in all aspects. If the song structure is similar to that of calisos of Trinidad half a century before, then surely St. Lucian caliso is no different from Trinidad's, which was more "modern." More importantly, this reveals the

[110] Crowley, "Song and Dance" 12-13.

class consciousness inherent in St. Lucian society. That a song sung in English, the language of the British colonists, would win a national calypso competition in a country where more than 90% of the citizens were more fluent in French Kwéyòl at the time, shows the sharp economic demarcations under which all St. Lucians lived.[111]

In the context of St. Lucia's social and economic stratification, the above passage reveals a common pattern that would later characterize calypso when it became a stand-alone show, all the way up through the late 1980s. That pattern is the privileging of English over French Kwéyòl. Time and again, St. Lucian performers who won the calypso crown sang in English, not in "patois" or French Kwéyòl that was, and still is, commonly spoken in St. Lucia. Thus, while Crowley names a popular calypso called "'Madiana,' named for the beach and nightclub in Martinique, [which] has almost the status of St. Lucia's national anthem," a song sung in Kwéyòl, it is not named as a past winner of the calypso competition. This turn by leaders to things British English becomes a common occurrence even as most of the colony spoke Kwéyòl as their first language. For example, when independence was granted, it was the British English calypso that was hailed as St. Lucia's music icon, while French Kwéyòl music was relegated to the past.

While Crowley's research is helpful as a starting point for St. Lucia's Carnival history, without supporting information from local newspapers it is woefully inadequate as scholarly information. Heavily influenced by his familiarity with Trinidadian carnival,

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[111] Mervin C. Alleyne explains that even though "English … [was] the language of social, cultural and economic prestige . . . [by 1960] the vast majority of people who were born and have grown up in St. Lucia can speak French creole; the 1946 census shows that less than .02% of the population spoke only English, while as high a percentage as 43.4% spoke only Creole [sic]": "Language and Society in St. Lucia." *Caribbean Studies*. 1.1 (1961): 1-10 at 4.. Although he does not list the intersection of what we now call Kwéyòl speakers who also speak English, I believe it safe to say that those who speak both English and Kwéyòl with varying competencies, significantly outnumber the British English speakers.

his information needs to be corroborated with other sources and his interpretations cross-checked with social and linguistic norms of the time. More relevantly, Crowley misses the role calypso held in the activities preceding Carnival, as well as its cultural interpretation to the wider populace and businessmen. Crowley constantly compares St. Lucian songs to those of Trinidad's when in local news reports Carnival music is labelled "calypso" and not "caliso," as Crowley calls them. Based on Trinidadian carnival music history, where these songs were called calisos in the 1890s and earlier, Crowley clearly interprets St. Lucia's carnival music as an older form of calypso, even as he references "an English caliso modelled on current Trinidadian forms." Clearly, although there may have been calypsos as popular as "Madiana," seldom were they showcased at the St. Lucia Carnival Queen Pageant. Although the songs may have been popular with their primarily Kwéyòl speaking listeners, it was British English calypsos that received more prestige. This may explain why, prior to the 1970s, the average St. Lucian did not consider calypso a form of music to rally around. Instead, it was seen as just another act to be performed at the real show: The Carnival Queen Pageant. As a result, the first newspaper mentions of calypso were only in the context of the Queen Show.

Calypso's entry into St. Lucian documentation occurs in a 1957 edition of *The Voice of St. Lucia* with the sentence: "A well-known local artist will … entertain the large audience expected to turn out to witness the competition, with a Calypso Melee, including Limbo and Belair dancing and a short play."[112] This is the first and only mention of calypso in the article. At this time, St. Lucian calypsos were purely

[112] Anonymous. "7 Competitors for Carnival Crown this Year: winner to get prize trip to Grenada." *The Voice of St. Lucia*. [Castries, St. Lucia] 24 Feb. 1957.

entertainment compared to Trinidad's expectation of calypso as political and social commentary, as well as satire. As Errol G. Hill points out in "Calypso and War," Trinidad's calypso was closely linked with 'serious' concerns such as who was winning or losing the war, and how to demoralize the other side.[113] He identifies the earliest calypso recorded as concerning "the capitulation of the Spanish government to invading British troops in 1797. The anonymous bard, singing in the French Creole or patois common to that time, was scornful of the lily-livered Spanish governor Don Maria Chacon, who surrendered the island without a fight."[114] War activities have significant political and social impact on both the slaves and the colonists. This singer definitely understood that, and sang of the battle in a very patriotic light. His song is emblematic of how the history of a musical genre impacts its development, affirming that Trinidad's interaction with "calypso" was informed by a very different context than St. Lucia's. In St. Lucia, calypso was introduced for the fledgling tourism industry and the only songs performed were the Road March winners of Trinidad. Road March songs tend to be more salacious and fun, so St. Lucia's calypso repertoire was not that of politics, social commentary or satire, but that of fun, frivolity and partying; therefore, St. Lucians' interactions and opinions of calypso were strongly shaped by what they assumed to be "good" calypso such as what those sung at the Calypso Melee, the term used for St. Lucian calypso competitions prior to the 1960s.

Although the unnamed author did not explain what a "Calypso Melee" was, paring it with Limbo and Belair dancing indicates its position as purely entertainment for

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[113] Errol G. Hill, "Calypso and War," *African America Review*. 23.1 (1989): 61-88 at *JSTOR*. 8 March 2012.
[114] Hill, "Calypso and War," 63-64.

St. Lucians.[115] Much St. Lucian calypso originated from primarily English-speaking Trinidad and Jamaica in the context of performing them at hotels. This calypso was more in the vein of Caribbean folk music than social and political commentary, as tourists were there for enjoyment and relaxation, not to get embroiled in local issues. Since British colonies were sites for fledgling tourism after WWII, their songs also spread to other English-speaking islands.[116] Given this, the Calypso Melee was most likely a medley of popular calypsos played at St. Lucian hotels for American and British tourists.

While calypso was just singing, the Limbo and Belair incorporated dancing on the stage. Although in Trinidad, "limbo in years gone by was performed during ceremonies for the dead such as wakes, and in particular the ninth and fortieth night after death ("nine-nights and "forty-days"),"[117] by the time it reached St. Lucia, it was wholly associated with the tourist industry. Limbo dancing begins with one person bending over

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[115] Belair dancing consists of moves ascribed to the African heritage of many Caribbean islands, including St. Lucia and Trinidad. A circle of people surround either a single person or a couple dancing to live music played by local folk musicians. See Winer, *Dictionary under* "Bele" (68-69).

[116] The "occupation" of Trinidad during the Second World War meant that "[c]alypso received special treatment because American soldiers required entertainment when they were not on duty. As a result, the long-held fantasies of calypsonian, of an entertainment industry, came true virtually overnight, as they performed for the Americans year-round."Christine G. T. Ho, "Popular Culture and the Aestheticization of Politics: Hegemonic Struggle and Postcolonial Nationalism in the Trinidad Carnival," *Transforming Anthropology*. 9.1 (2000): 3-18 at 10. Calypso tents received funding from the U.S. military to keep the 'boys' entertained and this led to Trinidad styled calypso becoming popularized throughout the U.S. in the 1950s and also in the Caribbean at tourist hotels. Also: "Virtually every island in the British West Indies has its own radio station, commonly subsidized by the government. The most important of these are in Trinidad, Barbados, St. Vincent-St. Lucia-Grenada (a shared station), and St. Kitts. They play, at certain hours of the day, the hit recordings of the year, and everyone in the countryside listens. As one walks through a village at these times, the radios are all on, tuned to the same station, and people often sing together with the broadcast. This is an inescapable part of the day." See: "West Indian Music on Records," *The Journal of American Folklore*. 82.325 (1969): 295-98 at 295.

[117] Molly Ahye, "In Search of the Limbo: An Investigation into its Folklore as a Wake Dance," *Caribbean Dance from Abakua to Zouk: How Movement Shapes Identity,* ed. Susanna Sloat (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2002), 247-61.at 247.Ahye engages in an eye-opening discussion of the origins of Limbo as she attempts to trace its origins and concludes that though it has links with some African spiritual traditions, in the form that is popular, it seems to be found only in the Caribbean islands of Trinidad and Jamaica. See also Winer, *Dictionary* :nine nights" 636) and "forty days (nights)" (359) for more on these memorial rituals.

backward to walk beneath a long horizontal stick held by two other people. The stick is gradually lowered until the person is unable to pass beneath the bar without touching it. At that point, s/he exchanges place with one of the other people holding the bar and that person does the same thing. Limbo was not indigenous to St. Lucia, as its first documented use was as entertainment for St. Lucia's burgeoning tourist industry. Imported from Trinidad together with English calypso, it was one of the "go-to" entertainment activities at any big social event in the city of Castries. The idea that anything good enough for the tourists was of the highest calibre and therefore should be showcased in any upscale event, which the Carnival Queen Show clearly was, definitely played a part in choosing Limbo dancing as part of the night's entertainment.

Calypso's debut competition in 1959, separate from St. Lucia's Carnival Queen Show, comes four years after Crowley's visit to St. Lucia in *The Voice's* article "Carnival at Palm Beach."[118] The author announces: "[in] this lovely tropical setting with cool sea breezes wafting through the coconut palms, Palm Beach Club introduces its Carnival Programme tonight with a Calypso Competition featuring St Lucia's top ranking Calypsonians, followed by a 'Hot Shirt' – 'Hot Shirt' Dance [sic]." The article then lists the contestants as: The Mighty Terror, The Mighty Bass, The Mighty Rock'n Roll, The Mighty Synco, King Cobra and Lord Guitar. According to the article, the all-male "experts [the calypsonians] will each render three calypsos on different aspects of life in St. Lucia including politics, etc." But these are dance songs for the audience, as in the following paragraph the author says, "Following this initial dance there will be staged on

[118] Anonymous. "Carnival at Palm Beach." *The Voice of St. Lucia*. [Castries, St. Lucia] 31 Jan. 1959.

the open Tennis Court the popular 'Miss Palm Beach' Contest." Again calypso plays an ancillary role to a beauty pageant, being essentially the opening act to the main performance.

The real draw for the audience was the Carnival Queen contestants, not the calypsonians. The Queen Show contests for 1959, as the newspaper reports, are: "Miss Julica John, 20, Telephone Operator, from Castries. Camilla Allain, 17, Commercial Student, from Soufriere. Miss Victoire Macdoom, 17, Seamstress, from Soufriere. Miss Anastasia Albert, 20, Seamstress, from Anse Maricille. Miss Gertrude Isaac, 17, Secretary, from Castries."[119] The article contains no mention of the calypsonians. As with beauty pageants like Miss America and Miss World, the St. Lucian contestants are young women barely past Secondary-school. Important information on whether they attended Secondary school or not is lacking here as attending and completing Secondary school would indicate contestants of a higher class. Significantly, the contestants' occupations mark most of them as middle-class by St. Lucian standards of the time: telephone operator, commercial student (trade school) and seamstress, indicating their desire for social advancement by competing in the competition.

In essence, this documentation reveals a fragmented view of calypso's beginning in St. Lucia. From Crowley we find the title of a popular "patois caliso" and the name of the calypsonian performer who sang at the Queen Show in 1955. He also provides the link between St. Lucian Carnival customs and Trinidadian ones, with the assumption that Trinidad is the original source of many of St. Lucia's calypso customs. Significantly,

[119] Anonymous. "Carnival at Palm Beach."

Crowley's example of a "caliso" is one sung in "patois," which he rightly identifies as an old song and not any of that year's songs. This is important because calypsos are seasonal and each year a new one must rise to the top, if one follows Trinidad's model, which Crowley does. This is yet another example of Crowley's erroneous interpretation of St. Lucian Carnival events because of assumptions based on Trinidadian culture. This kind of conflation is common in works written by colonial scholars about colonies. The underpinning idea is often that these areas are so small that there is negligible difference between them. Therefore, if you know about one, you know about all.

The Voice of St. Lucia reveals much more about Carnival season, but more importantly about the relationship among the Queen Show, and calypso performers and other Carnival musical acts. The organizers of the Carnival Queen Show in the mid-20th century always took pains to include at least one well-known female performer. However, all the singers at the shows were either foreign artists or local artists performing foreign songs. Throughout the 1950s singers at this show hailed from Jamaica, Trinidad, and Barbados. Often the only local singers were hotel acts who performed selections geared towards foreign English-speaking tourists, and the King of Carnival, a local singer who won St. Lucian Road March by singing calypsos from Trinidad. Both kinds of local performers sang Anglophone songs to audiences of St. Lucia's upper classes who expected that language, and they also sang primarily to English-speaking tourists who formed St. Lucia's burgeoning tourist industry.

St. Lucia's tourists came primarily from Britain and the U.S. The idea of the 'Caribbean' as the site of 'calypso' music with steelpan accompaniment occurred throughout the 1950s, in a decade which exposed the U.S. public to 'calypso' through the

Andrew Sisters' "Rum and Coca Cola," brought about by the U.S.'s involvement with Trinidad's burgeoning oil drilling industry.[120] Consequently, all islands in the Caribbean were the same to U.S. tourists and they expectated Trinidad-styled music from hotel performers. Moreover, the local colonial officials, upper classes, and businesspeople in Castries were keen on giving tourists what they expected. Hence, local singers and entertainers who wanted gigs at the hotels were required to have a repertoire that the tourists would expect and like, in a language they could understand. They sang songs primarily from Trinidad, Jamaica, Britain and the U.S. Hence, a show meant for audiences accustomed to hotel shows would expect nothing less from a highly acclaimed social event.

The only performers who did not perform foreign songs were the 'traditional' dancers. These dancers all wore 'traditional' garb and danced to songs in French Kwéyòl. Both their attire and language were associated with France, which, since the British took over St. Lucia, were now associated with being poor and low class. The local newspapers grudgingly mentioned these groups while foreign singing artists received much more fanfare. Even in the newspaper articles, short shrift was given to the local artists who sang in a similar vein to the foreign artists. St. Lucians sporting traditional French attire and speaking French Kwéyòl were labelled as backward and "old" in comparison to those sporting foreign attire and singing in English who were labelled new and "modern."

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120 For a more detailed discussion on the U.S. in Trinidad and how this gave rise to the Andrew Sisters' hit "Rum and Coca Cola, see above in the Introduction. For further information, also see: Funk and Hill. "'Will Calypso Doom Rock'n'Roll'" and Christine G. T. Ho, "Popular Culture and the Aestheticization of Politics."

Additionally, none of the singers performed La Rose or La Marguerite songs, which were more popular with a broader section of St. Lucian society outside of Castries. The ruling elites saw these combative flower festivals as "backward" and pejoratively labelled them as "folk" festivals, especially as the songs and people associated with them were French Kwéyòl speakers.[121] Therefore a distinctive break occured between the audiences of local "folk musicians" and that of city musicians. By this time, Castries, the main site for commerce and travel was also the main area where English Calypso's popularity soared. Most of the commerce was carried out with English speaking firms and organizations; therefore, English was the main language of commerce. In the mid-20th century, British English was still being forcefully taught at schools around the island and reinforced by social activities where the performers were to be conversant in English, even as many of the communities beyond Castries had little need for English outside of school. One example of this forceful teaching occurred when a "Head teacher in the village of Mon Repos would walk the village by night and flog any child whom he heard speaking patois …. [while] notices were displayed prominently in schools to the effect that children were forbidden to speak Creole at school or in the playground."[122] Many of the teachers and other professionals from islands which spoke no French Kwéyòl came to ensure St. Lucians spoke only English, and their methods for instilling a desire to speak English were harsh. Locals carried out daily conversations and local commerce among themselves in French Kwéyòl, as well as carrying out much social and commercial interaction with French-speaking Martinique to the north. Many people living outside of

[121] See Guilbault, "Musical Events."
[122] Alleyne. "Language and Society in St. Lucia" 5.

downtown Castries could easily avoid using English in most aspects of their lives. Therefore, activities needing English catered to a very specialized audience who could easily understand English and was interested in more Trinidad based sounds, instruments and audience participation. In effect, the hierarchy of elite versus commoner and, more importantly, city versus provincial musician was effectively reinforced by using acts that engaged primarily in English audiences.

In comparison to Trinidad's carnival, which was "governed" into respectability by the elites, St. Lucia's carnival was "organized" into its respectability by middle-class women. In *Governing Sound*, Jocelyne Guilbault further explains the role of colonial authorities and creole elites in creating governing structures and laws forcing Trinidadian Carnival and calypso organizers into more respectable patterns.[123] In most of this governing, women had little to do with organizing the Carnival events; it was a decidedly patriarchal group that governed the masses into acquiescence. In St. Lucia, a group of primarily middle- and upper-class women saw a chance to coopt the underutilized festival, Carnival, to put on a very feminine event: a beauty pageant. This puts St. Lucia women smack in the middle of creating a St. Lucian Carnival organized around a national beauty pageant, which gave calypso a platform to reach more locals. And nowhere is women's role in the development of Carnival and calypso clearer than when Miss. Uralis Bouty writes her autobiography about the early days of St. Lucian Carnival.

The 1957 article, "7 Competitors for Carnival Crown this Year Winner to get Prize trip to Grenada," reveals aspects of how Carnival became more respectable. The

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[123] Guilbault, *Governing Sound* 39-63.

article opens with “Carnival is here! This annual festivity which, it is said, has been improving steadily from 1948, will be ushered in with the Carnival Queen competition.” The title of the article indicates much higher stakes in this competition for the “Carnival Crown” than former years. The competitors are unnamed but the second line references the Carnival queen and not, as many would now assume, the Carnival king or calypso king. In comparison to Brandford’s vision of St. Lucians’ spontaneously coming together to usher in Jour Ouvert with voices raised in “harmonious” sound, which downplayed the chaos of Carnival events, this author is concerned with emphasizing how much “improved” Carnival will be in 1957. The improvement reflects more spectacular prizes for the Carnival Queen contestants. Travel between the islands was not cheap, and a trip to Grenada was a significant coup for any participant. Having such an expensive prize ensures that more “highly qualified”/upper middle-class contestants would enter the competition, raising the social status of the show and its respectability in the eyes of the St. Lucian upper classes. This expensive prize also indicates to local businesses and prospective audience members that the quality of the show would be higher, and ultimately more respectable.

This respectability would spread to all events associated with the Carnival Queen Pageant, demonstrating the organizers’ success in persuading the St. Lucian elite of the respectability of the pageant. The exorbitant funding from other upper-class citizens for one of their events meant that the other upper-class citizens would support their other events with the assumption that all their events would be of such a high quality. This would include their organization of Carnival Bands, Monday and Tuesday “jump-up,”

Carnival parties and even the accompanying calypso music; a musical genre which will eventually usurp the Queen Show.

CALYPSO SEPARATES FROM THE CARNIVAL QUEEN SHOW

Although calypso performances took place under the guise of "Carnival Melee" and were mentioned in a *The Voice of St. Lucia* article from 1954, it was a few more years before calypso was discussed in-depth in the public domain. Throughout the 1950s, calypso seldom received mention in *The Voice of St. Lucia*, apart from being an act in the Queen Show. Calypso finding its separate voice in the newspapers also previewed a decoupling from and eventual eclipsing of the Queen Show. This sequence of events began in the 1960s with more specific reporting first on calypso finals and their winners and then their multiple competitions. Calypso's expanding coverage took up much space in the newspaper, which occurs concurrently with its decoupling from the Queen Show and its 'organization' of more "respectable" shows. The newspaper coverage itself helps to raise calypso's public profile.

The decoupling of the Queen Show and calypso came in the late 1960s, just as St. Lucian independence from Britain became a real possibility. With the cries for independence coming throughout the Catribbean, some of smaller islands, such as St. Lucia, began to consider independence for themselves. Jamaica and Trinidad gained independence within weeks of each other in 1962 (6th and 31st August respectively). This achievement meant that the smaller islands could now seriously entertain ideas of their own independence. It was now easier to identify steps to become "independent" with Jamaica and Trinidad as recent, regional examples. In St. Lucia's case, it was easier to

look to Trinidad, as it was geographically closer and had a French and British history similar to St. Lucia's. Moreover, colonials as well as St. Lucian businessmen and politicians historically looked to Trinidad as a model for structuring their society, socially and economically. After centuries of exchange of colonial officers, slaves, artisans, etc., the two cultures knew each other well.[124]

What would this have to do with the decoupling of the Carnival Queen Show and calypso? One of the ways Trinidadian elites got the masses to rally around the idea of independence, was to find a cultural icon that was separate from British cultural customs, thereby showing that Trinidadians were different from the British. One icon they used to do this was the celebration of Carnival through singing calypsos, a song form they claimed was indigenous to them and the Caribbean, which was not part of British culture. In addition, they argued that they had created one of the newest instruments in the Americas, the steelpan, to accompany calypso. St. Lucia sought to position itself similarly to Trinidad, even as it sought to retain ties with England. In Trinidad, calypso occupied a much more prominent position in society than it did in St. Lucia. Therefore, in preparation for persuading the public to call for independence, it was in St. Lucia's best interest to elevate the status of calypso locally in a number of ways. Having a separate calypso competition which resembled Trinidad's would help them plead their case to the masses, and make it more likely that they would gain independence. So St. Lucian elites sought to use a song form which entered the island as a performance for tourists and change it to a national/patriotic song form.[125] Needless to say, that was a struggle, as

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[124] See: Joseph *Decolonization in St. Lucia* 50-81.
[125] See Chapter 1 for more information.

calypso had already had already proven that it was not for the Kwéyòl speaking locals from the country, but for the English speaking elites from the city.

Between Jamaica and Trinidad, the model which most resonated with St. Lucia's history was Trinidad, but the view of Trinidadian women singing Trinidadian calypso differed from the St. Lucian view of women singing at St. Lucian folk festivals. Trinidadian society frowned upon women being involved in calypso to the extent that almost no women sang calypso up until the 1950s. Until then, calypso was the proverbial "all boys" club. And St. Lucia needed to adopt the same policy if they wanted to show their similarity to Trinidad. The article "Queen Contestants will be Presented Tonight" announces, "[a]lso appearing at the show will be the 1967 Carnival Queen Miss Heather Yorke, who is also the holder of last year's Caribbean Queen title. Meanwhile, it is reported this week that there will be a Calypso King competition this year."[126] The transition here of "meanwhile" suggests that the Calypso King competition was somewhat a male "match" to the female Carnival Queen Pageant. The Carnival Queen Pageant is a socially acceptable competition between female contestants for the position of Queen of Carnival, and more importantly, it was a competition where they could win expensive prizes to raise their social and professional status. In previous years, a singing competition between males was a socially acceptable way to win the title of King of Carnival. But St. Lucia *was* different from Trinidad in that, though the competitions were separate, the two "met" on the stage of the Carnival Queen Show, a joining that did not happen in Trinidad.

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[126] "Queen Contestants will be Presented Tonight." *The Voice of St. Lucia*. [Castries, St. Lucia] 3 Mar. 1957.

The decoupling was also a patriarchal move, seeking to position women in separate spheres from men on the public stage. It instituted and codified the idea that women and men who enjoyed the limelight could only experience Carnival in gendered ways. Whereas St. Lucian calypso started on a stage with other female St. Lucian singers, decoupling it from the beauty pageant and trying to maintain the mores which existed in 1930s and 1940s Trinidad meant that no women were allowed to sing calypso. From the 1950s to the 1980s, St. Lucian women who wanted national adulation from the English speaking elites had participate in a beauty pageant, while St. Lucian men who wanted national adulation from the same elites could only do so while singing calypso. This dichotomy developed in contrast to the mores at play in the more popular flower festival events throughout these 40 decades. During the festivals of La Rose and La Marguerite, both men and women performed "folk" songs but their gendered roles were more fluid.[127] Ordinarily, women were the "song leaders, called in Creole chantwèl … [that] comes from the French word, 'chanterelle,' which toward [sic] 1540, referred to a lead-singer. Even though men and women can be a 'chantwèl' in St. Lucia, the majority of song-leaders in the La Rose and La Marguerite groups are women" (35).[128] Men primarily played the instrumental accompaniment using goat skinned drums, banjos, shak-shaks, etc. St. Lucian French Kwéyòl speaking women were used to commendations for their

[127] La Rose and La Marguerite are "ostensibly only singing societies dedicated to praising the rose or the marguerite flower (bachelor's button, globe amaranth, gromphrena)": Crowley "La Rose and La Marguerite Societies" 541. These festivals mirror the economic divide in St. Lucia by praising the attributes of rich or poor. La Rose is prides themselves on being loud a boisterous at their fetes, while La Marguerite prides themselves on their piousness and discipline at their events. As a result, more poor St. Lucians are attracted to the "*chaleur*" (hotness) of La Rose, while the middle and upper classes, who disdain the loudness of La Rose people, gravitate to La Marguerite.
[128] Guilbault, "Musical Events" 35.

accomplishments and not prized only for their "beauty" and youth, with short shrift paid to their other "talents," as many St. Lucian males pejoratively described the performances of the Carnival Queen contestants to this day. Therefore, by embracing calypso as a national icon which would unite the Caribbean in the 1960s, St. Lucia's colonial and local leaders effectively shunned a large part of the populace, both male and female, who spoke French Kwéyòl, in addition to inserting a gendered dichotomy at odds with St. Lucian history.

Through the 1960s, the gendered separation went even deeper, though, to the organisation of the competitions and even to the sponsoring of these events by local business owners. While women ran the exceedingly organised Carnival Queen Pageant via small committees and then the St. Lucian Jaycees, the men had no one in charge of organisation until the formation of the Calypso Association in 1966, when they booted out the women who were in charge of the entire carnival production. Probably as a result of the organization of the Carnival Queen Pageant, the women enjoyed sponsorship by many local businesses. And even into the 21st century calypsonians complain about the lack of sponsorship for calypso competitions.[129]

Conversely, as a result of the men's more low-key and disorganised competition, little sponsorship from local business was to be had. Because of the difference in sponsorship, the Queen Show was much better advertised in the local newspaper at the time (*The Voice*) while the only information gleaned about the King of Carnival was

[129] In interviews carried out with prominent Take Over Tent (TOT) members Cecil "Charlo" Charles (manager), Cyril "Get Through" Felix (founder and calypsonian), and Allan "Striker" Hippolyte (former member and host of "Talking Calypso"), they agree that male calypsonians often complain that the prizes for Carnival queens are much better than that of the calypso monarchs, even as calypso has more prestige. See: Hippolyte, Allen, Cecil Charles and Cyril Felix. Personal Interview. 25 Jul. 2013.

tangential to the Carnival Queen Pageant, where the King of Carnival each year remained a side performer. The year 1968 therefore becomes important as the first time that the male singing competition is linked to the Carnival Queen Show as a male-only space. But it is also in this year that the male singing competition, King of Carnival, becomes overtly restricted to "calypso" with its title changed to Calypso King.

These developments foreshadow and mark significant changes in interaction between Carnival events that led up to the Jump-Up on Carnival Monday and Tuesday, while keeping some basic assumptions about what makes a "good" Carnival season. The aforementioned innocuous sentences naming the Carnival Queen in opposition to the Calypso King reveal a codification of women's place in Carnival being in the beauty pageants with the men's place being in the music competition. Moreover, these sentences show an acceptance of calypso as the music inherent to Carnival, thereby adopting a major part of Trinidadian style of carnival celebrations. These simple sentences therefore, herald a stronger presence and coverage of Calypso music and competitions in St. Lucia's oldest newspaper, thereby encouraging the reading public to embrace these changes as well. Women's participation in Carnival music is severed even as their centrality to Carnival remains intact in the form of the saying "there is no good carnival without women."

HISTORY OF ST. LUCIA'S CALYPSO

Essentially, the separation of the Carnival King from the Queen Show effectively genders calypso by making it the exclusive province of the male contestants. Making Carnival more significant on the St. Lucian calendar provided opportunities for

highlighting local musical artists in the city. Organizing the Carnival activities around the St. Lucia Carnival Queen show provided a literal stage on which local performers, who primarily performed at the hotels, could show how "worldly" St. Lucia was becoming by performing acts and music from the region and more Eurocentric cultures. And finally, promoting a British English song-form, in a primarily French Kwéyòl speaking island, emphasized the St. Lucian elite's strong commitment to British-linked territories at a time when the clarion call for independence from many British Caribbean islands created a push for unity among the Anglophone islands.

A brief history of St. Lucian calypso is necessary here because (1) there are comprehensive articles or books written on St. Lucian calypso and (2) soca's gender normativity was constructed on calypso's history of music and assignation of gender roles. In the following pages I chart the organization of calypso as an event on its own, which has now achieved more prominence to Carnival celebrations than the Carnival Queen Show.

The first mention of an organized calypso movement appeared in a 1958 article, whose content was mostly about starting a Vieux Fort Carnival Queen contest, even though the title was "Carnival Fever Moves South."[130] Buried in the middle of this news story is the information: "The Commandoes Steel Melody have established a Calypso tent at the Coolie Town to which an entrance fee of two cents is charged, there Lord Interpreter (Peter Medouze) heads a singing troupe, practising and entertaining the public with his on the spot calypsos, limboes [sic] and Rock 'n Roll." Again the Queen Show is

[130] Anonymous. "Carnival Fever Moves South." *The Voice of St. Lucia*. [Castries, St. Lucia] 1958: 8.

the attraction, and while discussing the steel band, the author mentions that this band created a calypso tent, not calypsonians. With its establishment, calypsonians now have a place to perform 'spot calypsos, limboes and Rock'n Roll.' The linking of calypso to the Trinidadian Limbo and American Rock and Roll emphasise calypso's outsider status in the traditional St. Lucian music scene. But this excerpt also shows the city versus country dichotomy that calypso amplifies, as calypso was primarily popular in St. Lucia's largest population centers: Castries in the north and Vieux- Fort in the south.

By 1966, *The Voice* conducts the first in-depth piece on a named calypsonian outside of the Queen Show. The news article "Mas Men Seek a Holiday for the Fete"[131] states that "Lord Brynner, Trinidad and Tobago Independence Calypso King, will sing at the 'Queen of the Bands' show, which is scheduled to take place at the auditorium of the Castries Town Hall on February 27."[132] The writer explains that this visit came about because "the Carnival Bandleaders Association, has made arrangements for him to sing at their show.… [The 1965 Calypso King] who will be chosen after the Calypso Cavalcade on February 25, and 26, will also perform during the show. An extra attraction will be a number of performances by a troupe of local acrobats." The novelty of a "real" calypsonian visiting St. Lucia was heralded as major coup for the fledgling Bandleaders

[131] Anonymous. "Mas Men Seek a Holiday for the Fete." *The Voice of St. Lucia*. [Castries, St. Lucia] 13 Feb. 1966: 10.

[132] A competition where each carnival band produces an elaborately made costume that a female wears and competes for the best costume, which would make them the reigning "Queen of the Bands." The same is done for one male member who competes separately as "King of the Bands."

Figure 2: Trinidadian Lord Brynner (1966)

Association, to the extent that Lord Brynner basically headlined at the St. Lucia's Calypso Cavalcade.[133] This indicates that calypsonians remain an imported Trinidadian oddity appreciated by the English speaking St. Lucian elites, and not by the St. Lucian French Kwéyòl speakers. The local calypsonians were still more "troupes" who performed a variety of musical styles, which revealed that their main audience was not the St. Lucian population but primarily European and American tourists vacationing at hotels. St. Lucian leaders and the upper classes developed a taste for these performances as a way of aligning themselves with the tourists and distancing themselves from the locals. Doing this fell within the colonial mindset which prioritized anything foreign to the colonies as better than anything created there. Hence, calypsos' inescapable entanglement, at the time, with spectacles such as acrobatics.

The Carnival Committee named here did not comprise the original, mostly female, group, who disbanded some years earlier. From this 1966 article, we learn that certain members of the public, under the name of "Ole Mass," had expressed irritation

[133] The Lord Brynner was born Cade Simon. For a list of his recorded calypsos, see Louis Regis, *The Political Calypso: True Opposition in Trinidad and Tobago, 1962- 1987,* (Mona, Jamaica: University of the West Indies Press, 1999, 259. "Lord Brynner, who thrilled listeners in the late 1960s and 1970s ended up as a vagrant in the 1980s before he died." Hollis "Chalkdust" Liverpool, *From the Horse's Mouth: An Analysis of Certain Significant Aspects in the Development of the Calypso and Society as Gleaned from Personal Communication with Some Outstanding Calypsonians* (Diego Martin, Trinidad: Juba Publications, 2003), 155.

with the females who made up the carnival committee and whose organization had brought Carnival and calypso to national prominence. Ole Mass claimed that when the original group broke up in 1952, the "management of Carnival [was given] to a Committee made up …of the same P.C. Girls with the exception of the Chairman who …was made th[sic] scape goat."[134] The pejorative tone and terms used to discuss adult females indicate that the writer was irritated that a group of "girls" wielded this much power for so long. And accusing the mostly female committee of being secretive concerning their profits was all it took to create an all-male Carnival Bandleaders Association in the early 1960s, to exert some *control* over the events surrounding carnival. The new committee then invited calypsonian Lord Brynner to headline the Queen of the Bands show, probably to showcase the importance of the competition and their clout. So, instead of local singers who performed Lord Brynner's and others' songs being headliners as they did at the Queen Show, the Carnival Bandleaders Association had Lord Brynner perform the songs himself, downplaying local performers and local musical acts. Even as the reporter highlights the show, it is obvious that foreign artists receive greater attention, as none of the local calypsonians are worthy of mention.

But, by 1967, local calypso beat reporter Guy Ellis changes this status quo, indicating the event's growing acceptance by the elites who funded *The Voice of St. Lucia*. He ensures that local artists get as much attention as the visiting calypsonian. He is the first to include more detailed information on calypso competition for reasons not identified in any of his articles. But, in January of 1967, Ellis gives a scathing critique of

[134] "Behind the Carnival Mask by Ole Mass 1959."

Carnival in hiswell-articulated article "The Outlook is Not Too Bright, So Let's Ban Next Month's Carnival … And Celebrate for Independence Instead," which takes the organizers of carnival to task for waiting too late to identify the carnival queens, as well as to approach businesses to sponsor the Carnival. [135] In light of the completely new Carnival Committee of the year before, as well as Ellis being a bandleader himself, this issue is likely a move by those loyal to the former committee members to make it difficult for the new people to create a successful Carnival, thereby seeking to reestablish the former committee. Alternatively, it could be a sign that the new committee is getting its bearings more slowly.

Ellis' call for banning Carnival in lieu organizing its activities at the last minute, seems to be just what the committee and businesses require to get in gear. The fruits of Ellis' diatribe materialize in the following week's column, "Calypso Tent Opens at Havana Club," where he references a calypso "season" that starts more than two weeks before Carnival celebrations, compared to the weekend before Carnival festivities leading into Jour Ouvert. Additionally, the competition is no longer the Calypso Cavalcade, but is renamed the Calypso King competition. He identifies the Carnival music performers for that year: the reigning King Mighty Terror, Lord Zandolie (lizard), Mighty Killer, Lord Crusoe, Lord Jim, Lord Jackson, Lord Mortimore, Mighty Fleecer, Mighty Canary, Mighty Pele, Mighty Hedgehog and "many more."[136] At Ellis' urging, information on the St. Lucia's calypso competition graces the pages of *The Voice of St. Lucia*. Detailed

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[135] Guy Ellis, "The Outlook is Not Too Bright, So Let's Ban Next Month's Carnival …And Celebrate for Independence Instead," *The Voice of St. Lucia*. [Castries, St. Lucia] 14 Jan. 1967, 11.
[136] Guy Ellis, "Calypso Tent Opens at Havana Club." *The Voice of St. Lucia*. [Castries, St. Lucia] 21 Jan. 1967: 9.

information on the local calypso competition is now part and parcel of the Carnival season.

Under Ellis' penmanship calypsonians gain national attention to the extent that they are identifiable as St. Lucian music stars by their pictures. Below are the first St. Lucian calypsonians to grace the pages of any local text:

Figure 3: St. Lucian calypso singers (1967).

Ellis' role in the nascent organization of St. Lucian calypso continued to be even more pronounced. Ellis demands more of the local calypsonians by urging "Let's have a Local Road March Tune"[137] in his article of the same name, one week later. He suggests

[137] Guy Ellis, "Let's have a Local Road March Tune," *The Voice of St. Lucia*. [Castries, St. Lucia] 25 Jan. 1967.

having a local tune for Carnival, intimating that only foreign songs were used for Road March or 'on de road' in previous years. Citing the launching of a "five-night tent" organized by the Calypso Association, he believes that this is the time to promote local calypsonians during Carnival. Using foreign songs as automatic Road March songs demonstrates how divorced from St. Lucian culture and activities calypso remained. Ellis explains that St. Lucian revellers had "no choice [but] to jump the streets to the steelband sounds of tunes composed by outsiders, mainly Trinidadians." In so doing, he alludes to the practice of local bands copying the songs popular in Trinidad during the two day costumed parade. He makes this point clear when he lists Road March tunes of 1966 as Mighty Sparrow's "Melda" and "Roslyn" as well as King Fighter's "Man in the Pyjama Suit" and "Archie," all foreign songs by foreign calypsonians. At the end of the two-day parade, the song gaining the most play was chosen to be the Carnival's "Road March" song, meaning that it is the song that the revellers most liked to "march" (or chip) to.[138] Ellis sought to change this by using his position as a reporter to inform the public on when and where the calypso tents were held and critiquing the songs performed, often in comparison to Trinidadian calypso. Here, the Trinidadian influence cannot be clearer as the calypsos in competition for Road March were all from Trinidad, with none from St. Lucia. Hence, the St. Lucian Road March calypsos would always be Trinidadian songs. Also clearly revealed in the article is St. Lucian Carnival and calypsonians' reliance on Trinidad to provide musical accompaniment. This exemplifies St. Lucia's desire to follow in Trinidad's wake in terms of calypso.

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[138] Winer, *Dictionary* under "chip" meaning 3, defines the term as: "a small shuffliing step; used esp. for moving through the streets to music" (204-05 at 204).

The Ellis highlights steelpan's importance to calypso's success in St. Lucia. Without the steelpan, the 'sound' of calypso is not as authentic that which comes out of Trinidad and the use of these instruments also provides a source of revenue for Trinidad since St. Lucia would be importing them. In this article, Ellis also explains what kinds of bands were expected to play these songs as he argues that there *is* time for the bands to learn local songs in time for carnival. He explains that "[i]t is not just any calypso which the panman finds easy to play in road march [sic] style. So it will be left to the calypsonians to compose the appropriate tunes." From this we can infer that steelband was the mandatory accompaniment for calypso. Hence, in addition to acquiring the steelpan in place of local instruments, St. Lucians also adopted the singing conventions of calypso: singing calypsos with steelbands in accompaniment. Adopting both the singing style and the instruments of Trinidadian calypso shows the lengths to which St. Lucians were willing to go to sing "real" calypso, instead using the more European and American style bands/orchestras they used before, or even leaning on their own forms of music.

Again, this whole-hearted embrace of things Caribbean and British made it easier for St. Lucia's political leaders to maintain good relations with Trinidad throughout Federation, Associated Statehood, and independence and even through the new neoliberalist movement.

FEDERATION/INDEPENDENCE/NEOLIBERALISM

As British global power began to wane after WW II, St. Lucia's Carnival celebrations, and the activities of the Carnival Queen Show and Calypso Cavalcade/Carnival King competitions surrounding it, rose to prominence in a timeframe

far from the anti-colonial riots of Trinidad in the mid- to late- 19th century. Since its (re) "organization" in 1948, Carnival and its activities in St. Lucia have followed a very capitalist and neoliberalist track. Carnival served many purposes to many groups in St. Lucia. By supporting Carnival celebrations, the colonial representatives in saw an opportunity to insert a British-associated event onto the national religious and social calendar, already filled with French Kwéyòl linked celebrations. Local leaders from the upper classes and other Caribbean countries also saw support of Carnival as a way to circulation of money within the St. Lucia (not just going out to England), as well as position St. Lucia as similar to the other British islands which sought independence from Britain starting as early as the 1930s. And it is Carnival's use as an economic engine which convinced the businesses and local people to finally embrace it. But to the regular reveler, it was one more expense for people who were poor but wanted to show that they could participate in national events in which rich people participated.

St. Lucia's internal monetary circulation is so important that Carnival butted heads with Christmas celebrations, as they come one after the other: Christmas (25th December), then Carnival (usually the weekend and Monday and Tuesday before Ash Wednesday). In 1959, *The Voice* reports on the commonplace problem of St. Lucians deciding whether to spend money on Christmas or Carnival celebrations. In "Christmas VS Carnival"[139] this issue is laid bare for the St. Lucian public. Christmas celebrations often include two events: Christmas and New Year's celebrations. Then and now, St. Lucians celebrated Christmas by offering hospitality to friends and family in the form of

[139] Anonymous. "Christmas VS Carnival Cartoon." *The Voice of St. Lucia.* [Castries, St. Lucia] NA Jan. 1959.

'visiting' and partying. Visiting often involved the host displaying their largesse by serving alcohol, local juices, meats, and stewed and baked dishes. This means that locals spend much money on these items, in addition to spending money on "sprucing" up the house by repainting or washing walls, changing curtains and cushion covers, weeding the yard, etc. Then there were the New Year's parties that cost money to attend and meant that attendees often had to secure new outfits, transportation, and lodging if they were from out of town. These events were huge undertakings for St. Lucians of every social level.

Additionally, the New Year's event of 'Square' festivities also required spending a considerable amount of money over a three-day period: New Year's Eve and the first two days of the year. Square obtains its name from its establishment as a national fair celebrated a square piece of land. One of the major reasons for Square is to celebrate the New Year with the wider community, and also to generate money for small business owners. At this event, St. Lucians dress in their best "liming" outfit and engage in other "liming" activities.[140] Liming consists of friends socializing in different venues with no specific destination in mind. For example, a group of friends could meet up at a local bar for a few hours, then go to the beach for another few hours, visit someone's house for a while before winding back at another bar and attending Square. The composition and number of friends can also change during this time. Liming can take place during the day or night and the main goal is to enjoy the company of the people in the group with no time constraints. Therefore, people attending Square fit the following groups:

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[140] See Winer, *Dictionary* "lime" (533).

entrepreneurs who sell wares in big wooden trays (food, toys, etc.); people coming to purchase these goods and "lime"; people coming to "people watch" (often with children in tow); and other governmental groups (police, doctors, nurses, firefighters, etc.). At Square there would be musical groups playing throughout in addition to other "games" for the audience to play (e. g. greasy pig, May pole, etc.). This event, at the start of the New Year, was a major source of money for many citizen vendors who would set up a tray and earn extra money for the coming months by selling food, toys and other trinkets.

When Carnival is added to that, with monies spent on costumes, paying for parties afterward, tickets for the Queen Show, and paying for drinks as well as transportation to and from the event, Carnival became a very real competitor to Christmas and New Year's Celebrations, especially for those who had little disposable income but who felt that they needed to keep up appearances by attending these national social functions. As a result, many St. Lucians often had to choose between these two prominent social events, but most went to great lengths to attend both. It was not uncommon for people to use rent monies to purchase costumes or be broke before the month ended because of monies or time spent on Carnival celebrations. So, while the merchants became very profitable during this period, common labourers fought to keep up with the monies they were expected to expend. Between December and February, many St. Lucian businesses profited while citizens became more indebted.

The cartoon below shows the twining of the economic and religious expectations especially as Carnival at this point is part to the Catholic liturgical calendar: depending on when Lent fell, Carnival could fall virtually on the heels of Christmas or two months after Christmas. Falling too close meant one of two things: finding money to participate

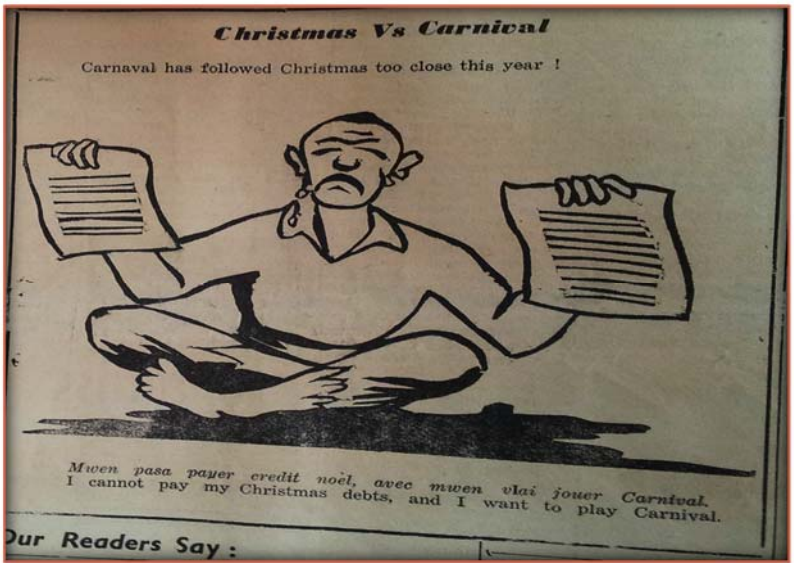

Figure 4: Christmas VS Carnival

in Carnival after spending an excessive amount on Christmas or participating only in one event. Many St. Lucians got into debt to participate in both, while others emphasised religion or bacchanalia.

From the 1950s to the 1960s, the capitalist impetus to generate more money is at the heart of the more organized Carnival and its surrounding festivities of Queen Shows and calypso competitions. The interest in potential money that generated by Carnival activities is nowhere clearer than in some of the newspaper articles of the 1960s, pre- St. Lucian independence.[141] The intertwining interests of capitalism and independence in St. Lucia led to a political and business class concerned primarily with economic issues of

[141] See: The writer, Ole Mass, of "Behind the Carnival Mask" first explains "Carnival as we know it today was started about 1948 by the P.C. Girls Club on a fifty cents per member subscription totalling some fifteen to twenty dollars. Incidentally, some members say they never got their fifty cents back." Cementing the importance of money to the Carnival project in St. Lucia, Ole Mass, goes on to accuse the "P.C. Girls" of pocketing the money from Carnival and stating categorically that they were "'under no obligation to make public [their] financial statement.'" Ole Mass, and probably others, believed that Carnival yielded much money and wanted to find out the dollar amount was in fact. And because of this grieviance, other organizations were eventually put in charge of Carnival celebrations.

creating wealth and increasing capital flow within the island. Hence, the monetary value of many aspects of St. Lucian society was calculated within the context of the economics of other Caribbean islands. Aiding in this comparison was the creation of the Federation, made up of British Caribbean colonies seeking independence from England. Since many the local heads of the British colonies were now in more contact because of the meetings about Federation, it was easy to gain information about the other islands. Trinidad was the standard for Carnival, and soon to be the site of the head of the Federation. It is unsurprising that St. Lucians looked to follow Trinidad's economic models.

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s *The Voice* printed articles on Trinidadian businesses profiting from supporting Trinidadian Carnival, imploring St. Lucians to follow Trinidad's trend. *The Voice* reports that "an outside observer of the West Indian Federation [has said] that Carnival is the strongest link in the West Indian Federation Chain."[142] Here we see one of the bases for embracing Carnival throughout the Caribbean: unification of the islands around a social event shared by all. Is this the reason St. Lucia embraced carnival and calypso so wholeheartedly? It may well be, as Trinidad-style Carnival is the one thing diasporic Anglophone Caribbean people maintain in their new home countries. The article continues,

> The mecca of Carnival in the West Indies is Trinidad, the capital of the Federation. In that island Carnival has been the supreme fete for over a hundred years. It has at present reached such a scale that it has to be seen to be believed. The merchants in that Island reap a harvest from the

[142] Anonymous. "Carnival." *The Voice of St. Lucia*. [Castries, St. Lucia] 7 Feb. 1959.

> purchases of revellers, some of whom are prepared to spend up to a thousand dollars on their costumes. It is therefore understandable that these merchants make every effort to support Carnival. In fact in that Island when it was decided by the Government to abandon the Carnival Queen competition the Junior Chamber of Commerce stepped in and will this year sponsor the Carnival Queen Show.[143]

From this excerpt we can see Trinidad's clout in the region as one of the bigger islands (whose influence will later grow with its independence in 1962), but more importantly as the geographic location for the capital of the future Federation and the perceived home of carnival. The profit that Trinidadian businesses make from carnival is also a very important part of the article, and of interest to the St. Lucian businessmen and politicians who would presumably also want to "reap a harvest from the purchases of revellers." The capitalist imperative to make money is blatantly on view in this article. It is also clear that a significant part of this imperative pivots on the Carnival Queen show, a fact revealed by the support of the Trinidad Queen Show by no less than the Chamber of Commerce, governmental entity, even when it was defunded by another governmental entity. Although Trinidad's Carnival Queen Show does not share a similar history to St. Lucia's, it too is an import aspect of Trinidadian Carnival celebrations.

The capitalist thinking surrounding St. Lucian Carnival is traceable back to the "organization" of carnival by those women who put together the Carnival Queen Show as a precursor to Carnival Monday and Tuesday. This is apparent in Rupert Branford's 1965

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[143] "Carnival." 7 Feb. 1959.

article in *The Voice*, "Carnival Not Much Fun in the Past." In this article, Branford interviews an

> oldster [who says] Time was when Carnival meant a time of jumping up for old and young; a period of uninhibited, wholesome pleasure enjoyed by members of every strata of society. Nowadays, the accent seems to be on prize money and other material gain which can be provided by the Carnival authorities. There is only room for the young energetic people. [144]

Here the "oldster" laments the commodification of social activities (carnival jump up) into something relying on monetary outcomes (prize money), a commodification linked directly to capitalist ideology.

Branford further claims that

> every person who has taken a hand in carnival before 1960 [believes that] carnival has gone a long way, as far as costumes, and competitions are concerned. Nevertheless, these features have been gained at the loss of the uninhibited gaiety, and fun which characterises carnival world over …At present, Carnival is enjoyed mainly in dance halls, or night clubs. Not on the streets or at impromptu parties.[145]

Although he identifies positives coming out of a more organized carnival, he points to a lack of 'uninhibited gaiety' as emblematic of a change from 'fun' to monetized. In essence, Branford's concern is that to enjoy carnival now, one must literally pay to play/play mas and to attend any of the Carnival festivities. Additionally, this bandleader

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[144] Rupert Branford, "Carnival Not Much Fun in the Past." *The Voice of St. Lucia*. [Castries, St. Lucia] 27 Feb 1965.
[145] Rupert Branford, "Carnival Not Much Fun."

indicates that St. Lucian Carnival's less structured composition in comparison with Trinidad's, hinting that the focus on money now relates directly to following Trinidad's example. More importantly, he references locals enjoying Carnival on the streets and at impromptu parties as signals that Carnival (at least in the memories of this oldster) was more of a public affair than in is the 1960s or now.

St. Lucian Carnival became respectable with help from the group in the community that most needed respectability: women. Carnival is so tied to women's bodies that in 1966 Guy Ellis berates the local businessmen for their lack of support for Carnival. And why are local businesses not supportive of Carnival? Because "they just cannot find girls to sponsor. By that I [Ellis] mean that the girls are unwilling to enter the competitions."[146] From this statement we can infer that the businesses that sponsored Carnival activities only did so if they had a female to help promote their businesses. Therefore, without women, there was no need for carnival. Ellis asserts that he "definitely cannot see St. Lucia having a real successful Carnival without a queen show. While it is true, that the real Carnival spirit is centered around jumping-up, playing 'mas' and having fun, we all know what influence any 'Queen' can have on anything."[147] Women's bodies, in the form of the pageant competitors, are what the carnival and all the activities around it use to gain funding for the event.

Ellis displays the messy ties between women, independence, Federation, and Carnival when he strongly suggests that

[146] Ellis, "The Outlook is Not Too Bright" 11.
[147] Ellis, "The Outlook is Not Too Bright" 11.

> the scheduled February 5-7 celebrations be CALLED OFF ENTIRELY [emphasis in original], Queen Show and all, and have Carnival as part of the island's Independence celebrations, which will probably start at the end of February. This will give the merchants more time to decide on what they're going to tell the Jaycees; it will give the girls more time to make up their minds, and it will give the bands more time to DECIDE [emphasis in original] what they will portray and starting making preparations. On the other hand, Carnival for Independence may well provide the best celebration this island has ever seen.[148]

Here Ellis entwines the celebratory ideas associated with carnival with, what he sees as a bigger goal: St. Lucian independence. His linking of independence is difficult to separate from Trinidad's independence, as Trinidad used Carnival as an example of having its own culture to persuade its populace to separate from Britain. By linking Carnival and independence, Ellis creates a similar rationale and bridge to brush aside claims by St. Lucians that St. Lucia is not developed enough to be an independent nation. In addition, he encourages St. Lucians to continue making original costumes celebratory of independence, in the hopes of attaining independence sooner, at the height of Federation movements. Even later, he suggests that the winner of the Carnival Queen Contest "also be hailed as 'Miss Independence,' marking the island's new constitutional status": a member of the Federation.[149] This seems particularly prescient of Ellis, because no one knew St. Lucia would gain independence on the 22nd of February, 1979.

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[148] Ellis, "The Outlook is Not Too Bright" 11.
[149] Ellis, "Calypso Tent" 9.

While Carnival generally became more money-oriented, calypso, with its newfound independence from the Queen Show, sought to emulate Trinidad using the costly Trinidadian steelpan, which became a hallmark of calypso songs.[150] In "The Steelband and St. Lucian Carnival" Branford calls for the use of more steelbands essentially as a money-maker for St. Lucia's fledgling tourist industry, since the tourists expect to see them:

> Carnival is not truly Carnival without steelband. The rhythmic, pulsing throb of the oil-drum with its resonant melody, has come to be synonymous with Carnival and calypso music as well…[and is] now the folk-orchestra of most of the West Indian islands. The steelband has permeated the musical world, and the music of the drums has already been heard in many countries throughout the world. Steelband is now recognised as the most outstanding West Indian contribution to musical instruments. Unfortunately however, visitors to the West Indies are surprised at the almost absence of steelbands in the islands other than Trinidad.[151]

While there is no doubt that the steelband is one of the musical instruments that has raised the visibility of the Caribbean, it is also associated only with Trinidad and is a by-product of their oil industry. It is difficult not to see this as St. Lucia's bid to follow in

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[150] Though the following words look similar, they are different in meaning: Oil-drum = the initial name for steelpan that references their origin as empty oil drums hammered and repurposed as drums (steelpan); Steelpan = the name of the actual instrument; and Steelband = a group of people playing different steelpans. See footnote 94 above.

[151] Guy Ellis, "The Steelband and St. Lucian Carnival." *The Voice of St. Lucia*. [Castries, St. Lucia] 28 Jan. 1967: 14.

Trinidad's wake as one of the first Antillean islands to fight for and gain their independence from England.

Overlaying this is also the spectre of St. Lucia turning more to English than to French. When St. Lucia became a British colony permanently in 1814, it was difficult to get the local populace to embrace English as St. Lucia's official language, and also to adopt British ways and laws. As a result, the colonial authorities embarked on a policy of denigrating all things French or French-derived. One of the main ways French remained a part of daily life in St. Lucia was in the speech of locals. The British colonists imported people from other Caribbean colonies which had been British colonies for centuries to St. Lucia to teach at schools where English was the language of instruction, to the point that students would be punished if they spoke Kwéyòl on the playground. Although British laws replaced French ones in the late 19th century, French Kwéyòl speech remained strong in the country and so did Britain's efforts to demonize it by associating it with belonging to low classes and being "backward."[152]

Therefore, when looking "throughout the world" it is easier for St. Lucians to aspire to be like Trinidad, which already made its place in the English-speaking world. In the later 1960s, Trinidad would stand out as one British island that had gained independence and achieved accolades both in the Caribbean and on the "world stage." Trinidad's international claim to fame was inextricably linked with Carnival: the home of calypso music, as well as a new instrument made to accompany this music: the steelpan. Tourism dollars also supported calypso, as the U.S. had partially funded it while

[152] In explaining the view of St. Lucian English speakers to French Kwéyòl speakers, Alleyne comments that "[t]he general attitude towards Creole may be summed up in one word: hostility" (Language and Society in St. Lucia." 4).

American workers and military men were stationed in Trinidad as a result of WW II and the discovery of oil off the coast of Trinidad.[153] Therefore, on many levels Trinidad was the logical place for St. Lucian leaders and intellectuals to look to for inspiration on the next step after Associated Statehood: independence.

CONCLUSION

Throughout this chapter I have used a variety of sources to piece together a history of St. Lucian Carnival and events which impacted the development of calypso. I began by tracing the scholarly texts on St. Lucian calypso and found that American Daniel J. Crowley was the one who was first to write about St. Lucian Carnival, even before the local newspapers. He did so by comparing St. Lucia's Carnival and calypso celebrations to that of Trinidad. And, thinking that Trinidad was the origin of Carnival and calypso, cast St. Lucia as a follower of Trinidad's calypso style, even as he saw discrepancies. Because he was presuming that the celebrations and events were the same, he made some errors concerning St. Lucian Carnival and calypso. And, using newspaper articles about St. Lucia's Carnival Queen Show from *The Voice of St. Lucia*, I was able to correct these mistakes.

These articles reveal the strong link between calypso and the Carnival Queen Show, in that calypso was part of the show. This led to my discovery that, unlike Trinidad, St. Lucia's Carnival was 'organised' by an enterprising group of women whose stated main goal was to organize a beauty pageant and who each personally invested monies to that goal. However, this is not the goal they articulated at the time. I argue that

[153] See: Ho "Popular Culture and the Aestheticization of Politics."

under the guise of ‘orgainsing’ the Carnival celebrations, they were able to also put on their beauty pageant: the St. Lucia Carnival Queen Show. Their endeavours were quite successful and by the mid-1950s they garnered much support from the local businessmen, as well as patronage from the upper classes of St. Lucia.

The Queen Show also highlighted local talent, one of which was the local calypso singers. Calypsonians who performed sang Road March songs from Trinidad that they had learned in order to satisfy the American and British tourists who visited St. Lucia. As is common in most postcolonial countries, anything produced outside of the country is ‘better’ than goods produced locally. Moreover, ‘white was right,’ which meant that tourists and white Eurocentric people had ‘better’ taste and knew what was really good. Therefore, if calypso was good enough for the tourists, it was good enough for the local upper classes. Due to these factors, the first exposure that St. Lucians had to calypso was an act that was a part of a beauty pageant. But calypso soon grew apart from the Queen Show.

Euralis Bouty and the women, and men, who put on the Carnival and Queen Show initiated St. Lucian Carnival but the Bandleaders Association usurped their reign, amid claims that profits going to charities were not going there. The all-male Bandleader’s Association took over in 1966, and was either inept at their job or met resistance from the businesses who were loyal to the ousted women. The Association eventually organized Carnival and soon began publicizing the events at the calypso tents, separate from the Queen Show. In short order, the Bandleader’s Association made calypso a big event by inviting well-known Lord Brynner to perform at St. Lucia’s Queen Show. This step encouraged more locals to sing calypso and to also want to write and

perform St. Lucian calypsos, not just regurgitate Trinidadian ones. Singing St. Lucian calypsos led to more competition and more local (city) support for calypso.

Overshadowing all of this were the financial impacts of these events. In a catholic country in which people spent much on Christmas celebrations, the rise of Carnival created a dilemma for most of St. Lucia's citizens, who were poor. Now, instead of only spending money during the Christmas and New Year's season, they felt that they also *had* to spend money going to Carnival activities. This new social obligation meant that many St. Lucians did not pay their rents to be able to pay for Carnival celebrations. But while the local poor were leaving bills unpaid to participate in these events, businessmen saw it as a way to earn more money. This idea of profiting from Carnival events was modelled off of Trinidad's, and St. Lucia's leaders eagerly followed suit in order to generate more money from St. Lucian Carnival. Big and small businesses profited at this time. Therefore, the plight of the pauper was ignored in favour of the of the entrepreneurial classes that represented their interests as synonymous with the nation's. In effect, St. Lucia's Carnival was born as an entrepreneurial venture, which was transformed into a national icon in order to maintain ties with Trinidad before, during, and after independence. Although this is not the story of Carnival that St. Lucians want to hear, it is an historically accurate interpretation of the information available at this time. Calypso, therefore, was an import to St. Lucia, brought in as entertainment for tourists, which is now labelled 'we ting' (our thing) and always a part of our heritage. It was not always so. Of particular importance to St. Lucians is to realize that many aspects of Carnival and calypso link strongly with the capitalist venture of making money. Not fighting the colonists.

CHAPTER 2. LANGUAGE AND GENDER POWER PLAYS IN ST. LUCIA

INTRODUCTION

For Caribbean people, music is an integral part of Caribbean life, and this is especially so for the carnival reveller. As such, music *should* receive a generous amount of scholarly attention and analysis. But it doesn't. Rarely is Caribbean popular music, such as soca, analysed for the ways in which it supports the power structures of the society. And it is this void that my dissertation wants to fill. Jacques Attali, the French music economist, highlights this aspect of music when he states, "the production of [music's original] … usage …[is] a social meaning expressed in code relating to the sound matter music fashions and the systems of power it serves."[154] Music and the lyrics attached to it arise out of, and reflect, the circumstances that gave rise to it. In this chapter, I trace the gendered power hierarchy at play in St. Lucian calypso and soca by comparing the social conditions in Trinidad and St. Lucia which have impacted the genres' lyrical and musical development.

I first discuss the conflict between French Kwéyòl speakers and British English speakers in the St. Lucian populace prior to the 1980s, and how that affected St. Lucians' interaction with the Anglophone calypso. I then address the social and financial power exerted by British English speakers over French Kwéyòl speakers, and how this power

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[154] Attali, *Noise* 24.

differential promoted or excluded St. Lucians competing in the calypso competitions. Next, I interrogate how the gendered power differential excluded women from these singing competitions, even as women who sang the local 'folk' music won social approval. Finally, I posit through a brief recent history (1960 to 1990) of St. Lucian calypso how the social, religious and governmental promotion of French Kwéyòl in the 1980s unintentionally ensured the acceptance of women singing calypso and soca in the 1990s and beyond.

MUSIC IN ST. LUCIA

Prior to the mid-20th century, the music which most closely reflected the social mores and systems of power in St. Lucia were "folk" or "Kwéyòl" music. In folk music, systems of gendered interactions and connections prevailed. While women were the lead singers (chantwèls), men provided instrumental musical accompaniment. Guilbault explains that the term "chantwèl comes from the French word, 'chanterelle,'[155] which [in] 1540, referred to a lead-singer. Even though men and women can be a 'chantwèl' in St. Lucia, the majority of song-leaders in the La Rose and La Marguerite groups are women.'[156] Also, the language of folk music, French Creole or Kwéyòl, had social significance for the audience. Even though British English became the official language of St. Lucia when the British took over in 1814, St. Lucian citizens had had a longer history of speaking French Kwéyòl and continued to speak and write in that language. Therefore, speaking French Kwéyòl became a form of resistance to British rule by the St. Lucian people. Because Kwéyòl was often the first spoken language of most St. Lucians

[155] In Standard French it means "bird call" and also means the same in the *Kwéyòl Dictonary*.
[156] Guilbault, "Musical Events in the Lives of the People of a Caribbean Island, St. Lucia" 35.

even up through the 1970s, songs in French Kwéyòl were more desirable and understandable to the larger populace. French Kwéyòl culture also maintained a different gendered power-sharing structure than British culture. In French Kwéyòl performances, the power sharing seemed more equitable, even in the lyrical content of the songs. Many French Kwéyòl songs had overtly heterosexual themes in which the female had as much agency as the male in the relationship.[157] Whether this power dynamic was a lived reality for women and men in the St. Lucian community is debatable, but that this equity was encoded in the music speaks volumes about a St. Lucian culture where singing competitions between females and males was the norm.

When calypso entered St. Lucia's social calendar as an act during the Carnival Queen Show, it did not feature songs created and sung by St. Lucians in French Kwéyòl, and so did not reflect the systems of power at play for the gendered populace. Instead, the calypso performances featured Road March songs from Trinidad. Two of the major differences between calypso songs from Trinidad and those sung in St. Lucia prior to the advent of calypso are that they (1) were sung primarily by men, with no space for women except as backup singers and (2) were sung primarily in British English, a language most St. Lucians of the 1940s had difficulty speaking and understanding, and only spoke when they had to. Hubisi Nwenmley explains that St. Lucians speak:

> an African-French in addition to an African-English creole. Very few St Lucians speak only standard St Lucian English; relatively few have

[157] St. Lucians sing folk songs in French Kwéyòl and many of these songs overtly speak of heterosexual relationships. As women are the primary singers, their point of view is highlighted in songs' narratives. However, it is not uncommon for men to sing also. It is also accepted that women and men can have different perspectives on an issue and can argue in song about these differences. A framework unusual for both calypso and soca**.**

> proficiency only in Kwéyòl. The majority of the population have varying levels of competence in Kwéyòl and St Lucian Creole English. There are also demographic considerations: more monolingual Kwéyòl speakers, for instance, are found in the rural areas than in the urban centres.[158]

Though Nwenmley correctly states that few St. Lucians speak only French Kwéyòl, he fails to mention that French Kwéyòl was the primary language for many St. Lucians and that, as a result, it affected the way they spoke any other language, especially British English. These differences intersected in an historical and political moment where the power structure in St. Lucia was primarily white and patriarchal, with those patriarchs coming from Britain or other British islands in the Lesser Antilles. Therefore, calypso began its rise in St. Lucia at the same time as middle- and upper-class St. Lucians sought to be independent from Britain but wanted to retain ties by keeping local bodies, primarily male, in positions of power while cementing British English into the fabric of St. Lucia to create links with other English-speaking islands. Creating social ties with countries such as Trinidad was paramount to creating a Caribbean/St. Lucian identity separate from, but still linked to Britain. The two overwhelming systems of power that calypso's rise served were those of entrenched patriarchy and Anglophone domination.

The impact of these systems of power on calypso was that calypso was gendered male and coded in British English. As a result of the overt split between the Carnival Queen Show (winner of the beauty pageant) and the Calypso King Competition (winner of the singing competition), the public face of women in carnival competitions was

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[158] Hubisi Nwenmley, "Language Policy and Planning in St. Lucia: Stagnation or Change?" *Language and Education*. 13.4 (1999): 269-79 at 269-70.

limited to beauty, a passive object, while that of the male was limited to the singing competition, an active subject. The few women who participated in calypso prior to the late 1970s[159] tended to be working class, and tended not to make it to the finals because they were women, and because they often spoke in Kwéyòl.

While more singers of both genders sang French Kwéyòl songs in the 1970s, the standard of British English even applied to the men, which posed a problem for most of the singers, whose first language was French Kwéyòl. Everyone was held to immovable aspects of the British system of power that undermined and decried anyone speaking French Kwéyòl as poor and stupid. By the 1980s, competition rules implicitly prohibited French Kwéyòl by ascribing points for "clarity in diction," which disproportionately disadvantaged French Kwéyòl speakers in two ways.[160] First, because French Kwéyòl speakers speak more quickly than British English speakers, it is more difficult for an English speaking person to understand Kwéyòl in conversation, making it even more difficult to understand in song, especially for the British English speaking judges and audiences. Second, the clause penalized singers with French Kwéyòl accents, in which final consonants often went unpronounced and vowels articulated in a variant of French rather than British English. This double-penalty resulted in an overwhelming number of British English songs reaching the finals, sung primarily by middle-class male St. Lucians in "perfect" English, with a minimal French Kwéyòl accents. Therefore, British

[159] Such as, for example Mme. Sequin from Castries.
[160] The criteria for calypso of the decades under discussion are unavailable as they were undocumented. However, I knew a number of calypsonians and songwriters who were aware of the rules and often commented on the placement of the calypso finalists whose "diction" was bad. In every instance, those who performed badly in this criteria had strong French Kwéyòl accents. Eg. Herb Black (Black Pearl's brother).

speaking St. Lucian men from the middle class dominated St. Lucian carnival music of the 1980s.

Calypso of the 1980s prioritized themes of nationhood, social ills and national unity.[161] But most calypsonians could not make a living out of a seasonal industry.[162] The late 1990s saw a boom of regional soca music, again originating primarily from Trinidad.[163] And soca's infancy in St. Lucia arose in concert with the rise of St. Lucian women in calypso, as well as French Kwéyòl becoming socially acceptable, even in the St. Lucian Parliament in 1998.[164] As many calypso performers also sang jumpy Carnival songs, it seemed easy to shift over to from singing calypso to singing soca. Hence many female performers who sang more "jumpy" calypsos or more songs in French Kwéyòl transitioned over relatively easily, easing the way for others.[165]

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[161] For example, "Second Hand Needle," "Walk and Wine," and "Do It Me Ah Go Dead."

[162] The only St. Lucian calypsonian to earn a living solely off of calypso is Ignatius Tissin, sobriquet "De Invada."

[163] There was sporadic representation of other islands by small numbers of groups which sang soca music: Burning Flames (Antigua); Square One, MADD (Barbados); Seventeen; WCK (Dominica); etc. Soca was so regionally consumed that the variants of the sound of soca elicited differing names for it. E.g. ring-bang from Barbados.

[164] In speaking about language policies of St. Lucia, Nwenmely reveals: "The close correlation in St Lucia between language and social status leaves no doubt as to the potency of the colonial legacy of negatives attitudes towards French Kwéyòl. This linguicismcan be illustrated from three separate domains: government, the Church and education. Section 31c of the 1979 St Lucian Constitution states that Parliament shall consist of people with the ability 'to speak and, unless incapacitated by blindness or other physical cause, to read the English language with a degree of proficiency sufficient enough to enable him to take active part in the proceedings of the House'" ("Language Policy and Planning" 271). In 1998, a "1998 change in the Standing Orders of the St. Lucia parliament . . . marked official recognition of a practice which had emerged in the late 1990s, in which oral presentations in parliament were delivered in both French-lexicon Creole and English. The change in the Standing Orders, however, was circumscribed by an explicit statement that use of Creole was limited to oral exchanges and that the official record of the proceedings would continue to be kept in English" (2093). See Herausgegeben von Ulrich Ammon, Norbert Dittmar, Klaus J. Mattheier and Peter Trudgill. *Sociolinguistics An International handbook of the Science of Language and Society/Soziolinguistik: Ein internationals Hanbdbuch zur Wissenschaft von Sprache und Gesellschaft.* Eds. 2nd Vol.3 Walter de Gruyter: Berlin, New York, 2006.

[165] Female calypso singers like Black Pearl, and Lady Spice who sang in French Kwéyòl made way for younger performers such as Janie, Q-Pid and Marie-Ann to be able to sing calypso and soca in French Kwéyòl with less censorship from the St. Lucian community.

In the 1970s, St. Lucian women made up a significant portion of soca artists and so the power structure of males-only at play in St. Lucian calypso's infancy seemed to be loosely enforced in soca. However, I believe that St. Lucia's embrace of a local French Kwéyòl culture that accepted, encouraged, and rewarded female French Kwéyòl singers, provided space for women on the national stage as valid competitors in a national calypso competition, where they could now sing in French Kwéyòl.[166] And with St. Lucia's acceptance of French Kwéyòl came the acceptance of French Kwéyòl music, sung primarily by St. Lucian women. Furthermore, some of the faster instrumental sounds associated with French Kwéyòl (the bottle and spoon, tamboo bamboo, conch shell) accompanied the singers and were reimagined through the use of new technologies (sampling and looping software) making them perfect for soca. These changes in St. Lucians' attitude to French Kwéyòl helped make space for women, but did not get rid of the entrenched mores about women codified in calypso and soca songs.

While the St. Lucian upper classes were responsible for the disdain of French Kwéyòl speech in public spaces, they eventually accepted it. The St. Lucian English speaking upper classes who had initially resisted French Kwéyòl prior to the 1980s set policy and social standards in the island. They were the remnants of the British colonists, and also colonial subjects from other English-only speaking islands. Both groups occupied the middle and upper-classes in St. Lucian society where their social, political and economic positions depended on their public embrace of British English and rejection of French Kwéyòl. However, their placement in a predominantly non-English

[166] The first female Soca Monarch, Black Pearl, says that she was actively encouraged to sing at French Kwéyòl flower festivals by her mother (a former La Wenn Kwéyòl [Creole Queen]) and that is what gave her the courage to sing calypso and then soca.

speaking country forced them to learn *some* French Kwéyòl to get by, while their children learned to understand and/or speak French Kwéyòl from their interactions with other native French Kwéyòl speakers at school or in the community. So, the embrace of French Kwéyòl culture, which may have started as a way to appease the general populace, was an indication of the assimilation of the last vestiges of the British colonials to St. Lucian life. And their assimilation opened the doors for the acceptance of French Kwéyòl on a social, political and economic level. But it did not change the entrenched patriarchal and sexist leanings of calypso.

Instead, what *was* enforced was lyrical narratives and themes reflective of idealized social mores about women that males generally held as true, bolstered by Trinidadian calypsos sung by men. Even as female performers sought to produce songs acceptable to those marketing soca, many had to navigate assumptions about what topics and themes were expected of them because they were women, as well as backlashes to songs perceived as antithetical to the dominant male perspectives on heterosexual relationships in calypso that informed the narratives and themes of soca. With more women taking part in Carnival musics, audiences and male performers assumed that their songs would be feminist in nature, as this is what happened in Trinidad when women entered the calypso arena. But this was not to be.

FEMINISM AND CARNIVAL MUSICS

When examining Carnival music's lyrics through the intersectional lenses of feminism and economics, it is important to discuss the state of these two realms in the context of the Caribbean. Feminism in the Caribbean is linked to, but different from,

feminist theory and practice of Anglo-American feminism of the 1970s. Second Wave Euro-American feminists assumed that the issues they experienced the same as that experienced by women of other countries globally, and so sought to join in sisterhood to solve those problems. By the 1980s women of the Third World, as well as women of colour in Euro-American countries, sought to assert the differences in their lived experiences by promoting liberalism, Marxism, radicalism, and socialist feminism based, largely, on race/ethnicity. According to Rawwida Baksh-Soodeen, this gave rise to "feminists defining themselves as 'Black', 'Native American", 'Asian', 'women of colour' and so on."[167] This led to a Caribbean whose feminist theory and practice is 'coloured' more Afro-centric than any other race/ethnicity, with an emphasis on the woman being "a symbol of strength and power holding the family together."[168] Slowly, the experiences of Indian and Chinese women are being included, but the experiences of white women have yet to be incorporated.

Although the feminist label has connotations of an appropriation of white (Eurocentric) women's issues, feminists in the Caribbean are still quite active, but function more under the label of "women's issues" than feminist issues. The perceived disjuncture between theoretical and practical modes of feminism have meant that, although women have ensured that they have much agency and a voice in the nations' concerns, few who live in the Caribbean take on the feminist label. Even as their practices are in step with feminist ideas, many reject the term due to its resonances with colonial practices, which assumed that the white person from a Euro-American context

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[167] Rawwida Baksh-Soodeen, "Issues of Difference in Contemporary Caribbean Feminism," *Feminist Review*. 59 (1998): 74-85 at 75.
[168] Baksh-Soodeen, "Issues of Difference" 75.

knows what is best for people of colour from different cultures. This is doubly problematic for women who were at the very bottom of the colonial power/social pyramid.

As a result, the gender politics women of colour who occupy the public sphere in male-dominated fields come under great scrutiny from their audiences and societies. Therefore, female soca performers who occupy public spaces at 'home' and on the international stage in the patriarchal field of soca carefully craft their transnational appearance both physically and lyrically.

TRANSNATIONAL POPULAR MUSIC AND WOMEN

With the advent of internet technology, more and more people of colour, such as female Caribbean singers, have gained visibility, especially in the realm of music. The increasing global visibility of popular music and musicians means that Caribbean singers, female as well as male, are aware of being compared by their audiences to world-class pop singers. Female singers in particular realize how their gendered bodies read to their audiences and constantly grapple with how to represent themselves on the world stage both lyrically and physically. This representation occurs in the context of Caribbean popular musics that, for Anglophone Caribbean people, refers to calypso, or more recently, soca. As a result, these singers are not just singing to Caribbean audiences but also Caribbean identified people in the Caribbean diaspora. And in the eyes of the diaspora, popular female singers from the Caribbean are exemplars of the Caribbean woman and their lyrics are instructions on how to be a 'real' Caribbean woman. But the

diaspora also compare these singers to other international popular female singers of colour.

Comparing Caribbean women of colour to their global counterparts leads to a discussion of how their work affects the often patriarchal narratives at work in most music industries.[169] Feminists, both within the Caribbean and globally, look to these female artists of colour to gauge how far women's rights have come now that women are more in control of their public appearances. Cynthia Mahabir explains that "[a]round the globe, women pop singers – and women of African ancestry in particular – are emerging as a powerful force for social change."[170] In 1999, the dominance of women of African ancestry in the pop arena was definitely on the rise. Now, over 10 years later, non-white pop icons still abound. But whether they enacted or elicited any tangible social change is questionable. Now we have Beyoncé, Rihanna, etc., all of whom are major international singers, but what has changed socially for the average female as a result of their popularity? Are they really a force for social change or is it that they are just the embodiment of centuries-old narratives recycled by the same women of colour to make money from their former "superiors"? And how do those narratives meld with feminist ideals of women as intelligent, autonomous beings, capable of inhabiting a variety of positions and titles at different times?

These questions are quite important, as recently some renowned female pop singers claim the title of feminist, even as it is difficult to see a feminist angle in their

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[169] For more information on the male dominated music industry, see Sheila Whiteley, *Women and Popular Music: Sexuality, Identity and Subjectivity* (Routledge, 2000).
[170] Cynthia Mahabir, "The Rise of Calypso Feminism: Gender and Musical Politics in the Calypso." *Popular Music*. 20. 3 (2001): 409-30 at 409.

work. World-recognized pop singer Beyoncé proclaimed herself a feminist in 2013, but do her themes and lyrics push for social change for women? With themes of female sexuality, beauty ideals and heterosexual relationships, Beyoncé fans cling to her easy hooklines and catchy tunes that speak to their lived experiences. But the normative ideals embedded in her songs, though pointing to salient social inconsistencies, often fail to envision an alternative that would truly be a "force for social change."[171] Ostensibly, her lyrics envision a feminism that is perfectly palatable for the stereotypical heterosexual male and allows the typical heterosexual female to assert her sexuality to her 'man.'[172] According to Beyoncé, becoming a mother in 2012 spurred her to say "I guess I am a modern-day feminist,"[173] a role in which she says she feels very "empowered." But that empowerment comes with the loss of her identity as a young, single, female in the pop world. She now has to redefine herself as a valuable commodity to her audiences in a way that encompasses her new identities as wife and mother, especially as she does not fit the traditional ideal of those roles. She is now, in Rihanna's words, "so hard"[174] that she has taken on an aggressive singing posture, complete with demeaning other women in

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[171] In 2013 Beyoncé labels herself a feminist, causing an uproar in the Black feminist circles. She makes this revelation during her "Mrs. Carter Show" tour, celebrating that she is now married to rap mogul and rapper Jay Z. Announcing her newfound feminism, she includes an excerpt of Chimanda Adichie's Ted Talk "Everyone Should be a Feminist" in "Flawless" where the refrain is "bow down bitches, bow down." Taking the aggressive posturing associated with 'hardcore rap' in this song, Beyoncé 'proves' her feminist power by articulating a forced subjugation of other females around her. This reinforces the stereotype of women always competing with each other and being ready to tear each other down, and also reinforces ideas of Black women being 'naturally' physically and verbally aggressive. By calling the women (her foes?) around her 'bitches' she dehumanizes them and emphasizes an animal nature in which the other animals must submit (bow down) to the alpha (Beyonce), or be kicked out and ostracized. If this is what is in a 'feminist' song, what is left for an anti-feminist song? And how do these lyrics promote positive social change for women rit large (women of colour and white women)?

[172] For example, "Partition" (2014).

[173] Beyoncé. Knowles, Interview by Jo Ellison. "May 2013 Vogue: Mrs Carter Uncut." *British Vogue*. Condé Nast. Digital Ltd., 4 Apr. 2013.

[174] Rihanna's song "Hard" (2009).

her lyrics, even as she sings about issues that affect women. Beyoncé has effectively become the femme fatale, even more sexualized than before her marriage and pregnancy, in an effort to remain attractive to the heterosexual male gaze.

On the global stage, audiences expect to see black, female performers such as Beyoncé, and Black Caribbean female singers are very aware of comparisons to her on some level. Since soca is the pop music of many Anglophone Caribbean-identified people, it is not farfetched that the singers would style themselves after other well-known black, female singers. In so doing, they may find themselves limited to performance choices of a black femininity prescribed by the former colonial powers.[175] Black Caribbean female singers of the 21st century look to trendsetters like Beyoncé to navigate the global music circuit. And they see narratives that reach all the way back to the writings by colonial planters such as Edward Long (1734-1813) in is *History of Jamaica* (1774) which speak of the "Negro and mulatto woman [black woman as] …the symbol of the diseased, sexualized body that is also a carrier of immorality …[whose] rampant sexuality … threatens the social and natural order."[176] Although the idea of disease no longer applies to wom en of colour, an overly "sexualized body" still does. The stage persona of many female pop singers tend toward overt sexuality, but for women of colour such as Beyoncé, Rihanna and Nicki Minaj "rampant sexuality" plays directly into these long held ideas about women of colour.

The public twitter fight between Taylor Swift and Nicki Minaj is an example of the way commercial institutions validate or shun women's public sexuality is acceptable

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[175] Link to Gregg's ideal of the historical image of Caribbean woman (always racialized as black) (Introduction, *Caribbean Women* 1-67).
[176] Quoted in Gregg, Introduction. *Caribbean Women* 21. Print.

based on race.[177] In 2015, via twitter, Minaj argued that her video, "Anaconda," should have gained a nomination for the Video Music Awards (VMAs) as it satisfied their criteria for Video of the Year. Set in a jungle, the "Anaconda" music video features scantily clad black women dancing with anaconda snakes. The women' huge posteriors, barely covered, are the focus of cameras which slowly track up and down their bodies. Minaj then commented that "When the 'other' girls drop a video that breaks records and impacts culture they get that nomination …and a few hours later] If your video celebrates women with very slim bodies, you will be nominated for vid of the year." In subsequent responses on other social media platforms, Minaj clarifies she was pointing out the many popular trends set by black women, that when adopted by white performers garner them the white performers praise from culturally and economical significant organizations such as the VMAs.

Taylor Swift's video, "Bad Blood," *was* nominated for the Video of the Year category but features two groups of slim, scantily clad "fighting-fuck-toys" causing mayhem in a city setting, as they fight each other.[178] The camera lazily tracks up and down their bodies, just as it does in Minaj's video. Swift responded to Minaj's tweet saying, "I've done nothing but love & support you. It's unlike you to pit women against each other. Maybe one of the men took your slot." Swift took Minaj's comments as a critique of her and her video, one which Minaj disputes, and accuses Minaj of targeting her.

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[177] Libshutz, Jason. "Taylor Swift and Nicki Minaj's Twitter argument: A Full Timeline of the Disagreement." *Billboard*. 23 July 2015. Accessed 4 June 2016.
[178] Caroline Heldman, *Miss Representation*. Online Documentary. YouTube. 13 May 2015. 5 June 2016.

Because of this short-lived argument between the two singers, a comparison of the videos is necessary. Both videos feature all-female performers and scantily clad women but deviate in that they play on two different aspects of female power/sexuality. While Minaj's video praises women with big butts by sampling Sir Mix-a-Lot's ("Baby got Back" intro "Oh my god Becky, look at her butt"), Swift's video shows a rift between two female assassins who start off the video as friends. Both rely on common female tropes: Minaj's emphasises black female solidarity, telling those women to embrace their big butts because men like it, while Swift exemplifies the physically strong female, skinny and sexily clad, making them attractive to a presumably heterosexual male audience. Essentially, both videos fit perfectly into a patriarchal order while promoting female body positivity and physical empowerment.

While the videos do not perfectly fit into the critique that Minaj makes, they *do* reveal the VMAs' view fat/big, scantily clad black women as too sexual, while slim, scantily clad white women exert just enough praiseworthy sexuality. And though Minaj's very valid point was lost it the ensuing fray, the interaction between Swift and her highlighted the normative sexuality ascribed to slender, white female bodies and the 'rampant sexuality' that is still ascribed to non-slender, black female bodies.

In the Caribbean, the concept of the Caribbean woman was articulated in popular songs, such as calypso, by primarily male singers and there was much push-back against these narratives of Caribbean women when Caribbean women themselves started singing calypso. But even with that push-back, the women were always very conscious of their female identities and the ramifications that could apply to them on and off the stage. Cynthia Mahabir explains how the inclusion of women in calypso effected change in the

Trinidadian society. She writes, "[w]omen calypsonians talk to women through calypso" but fails to note that they also talk to men.[179] Many female calypsonians are very conscious of their role in combating the common negative conceptions of Caribbean women that abound in calypsos sung by men, such that their positioning is often a response. By repositioning the lyrical narratives, female calypsonians have created a space to combat the male stereotypes. However, in so doing, they have also created a solid idea of what themes are *appropriate* for female calypsonians. Mahabir says of prominent female Trinidadian calypsonians that they represented these "new images of women as mothers, spouses, working women, breadwinners, … with a deep sense of dignity, self-respect and personal autonomy … [and] seized the moment to initiate a challenge to the politics of manhood that was the very essence of calypso."[180] Although these images/narratives indeed needed attention, they all focus on the politics of respectability for women, especially black women, and brand other women who do not meet these criteria as "jammets."

In essence, no matter how good a singer these women were, they were supremely aware of representing women in the Trinidadian society and took on that mantle very seriously. Female calypsonians are very aware of how that intersects with the politics of female respectability within the broader society. Belinda Edmondson states that "certain popular culture rituals performed by women constitute a kind of ideological 'work' that both reflects and furthers the struggles for power among the various ethnicities and classes in the region."[181] She succinctly identifies the root of female calypsonian anxiety:

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[179] Mahabir "The Rise of Calypso Feminism" 412.
[180] Mahabir "The Rise of Calypso Feminism" 413.
[181] Edmondson "Public Spectacles" 2.

that by entering the homosocial zone of calypso, they are diffusing the power that male calypsonians held over the conceptions and discussions concerning the role of women in Trinidadian society, as well as challenging the ideas of *respectability* in public spaces for women. Mahabir reveals this when she quotes Calypso Rose, a renowned female calypsonian: "'[p]eople thought what I was doing was degrading, but I was very respectful within my surroundings – which were my male counterparts and the public. I showed them respect when I got on stage. I don't strip myself."[182] As an entertainer, Calypso Rose was very aware of the social stigmas attached to her inhabiting a female body in a male-dominated and -oriented field. She uses the term "stripping" not to mean someone literally taking off their clothing onstage, as female calypsonians did not strip on stage; but she *did* know that Trinidadian society assumed that women who dressed provocatively in body-hugging attire were selling sex. The label would stick to her singing persona, was well as her personal life. Interestingly, this assumption actually seems to harken back to the original *cariso* singers, many of whom were indeed prostitutes.[183] But Calypso Rose and her compatriots saw themselves more as gentrifying calypso, making it an artform where respectable women, and men, could sing and be acceptable in the eyes of the Trinidadian society, thereby making it more marketable to a foreign audience under the Trinidadian flag.

Many of the narratives female calypso and soca performers from Trinidad sought to dispel, or provide alternative accounts of, tended to involve romantic heterosexual relationships. This is primarily because there is a long history of calypsos about male-

[182] Mahabir "The Rise of Calypso Feminism" 417.
[183] See chapter 1 and the sources quoted in Winer, *Dictionary* "cariso" (171).

female heterosexual relationships painting women in a negative light and men in a positive one. However, when female singers started to respond to those songs, the male singers tweaked the narratives so that they still focused on women, but were focused instead on instructing women as to what sexually suggestive action or dance move they should perform. But before we can go into the instructive songs (soca), it is helpful to explore the history of women's portrayal in calypso, soca's parent music form.

SCHOLARSHIP ON LYRICAL CONTENT OF CALYPSO

The discussion of Carnival music themes can only take place when lyrics of the songs are available. In St. Lucia's case, few recordings or lyrics remain of the calypsos or other popular songs sung in the early 20th century to ascertain what themes were present. Although song titles from the 1950s and 1960s do exist, it is difficult to divine the content of the songs unless the lyrics are explicit. However, since St. Lucia's calypso history began with Trinidadian songs in the late-1940s, it is plausible that those songs contained the kinds of heterosexual power hierarchies common to many other Trinidadian calypsos of the time and even now. Therefore, a discussion of heterosexual relationship themes in calypso in St. Lucia will necessarily begin with a discussion of heterosexual relationship themes in Trinidadian calypso.

Since the early 1900s, portrayals of relationships between Caribbean men and women have been a major theme throughout the development of Carnival music, alongside more 'serious' calypsos. The heterosexual relationship song in Carnival music consistently involved a cheating female spouse, a scheming female, a lying female, or a

male begging for "just a little wine."[184] Although always very popular, this type of song scarcely made it to the calypso finals. The calypsos that did make it were "serious" songs with correspondingly "serious" themes concerned with broader national issues such as politics and social ills, and not relationships. In St. Lucia, because calypso entered the island as entertainment for tourists in the 1940s, calypso singers only sang heterosexual relationship calypsos as these often won the Road March competitions and were more danceable. Calypsos with more serious themes would appear decades later in the late 1960s. And in both countries, primarily male calypsonians sang calypso, until the 1960s in Trinidad, and late 1980s in St. Lucia.

HISTORY OF ST. LUCIAN CALYPSO

Calypso entered St. Lucia as a form of musical entertainment for Eurocentric tourists who expected it at their tropical hotels in the 1940s, and entered St. Lucian society at Carnival Queen Shows in the 1950s organized by Miss. Euralis Bouty and others.[185] From singing the winning Road March calypso from Trinidad in the 1950s and 1960s, the advent of the Carnval Development Committee in 1966 and the St. Lucia Calypso Association 1975 encouraged St. Lucians to sing their own calypsos, even as they continued to use Trinidadian songs from Road March. The formation of these associations gave rise to calypso tents such as South Calypso Tent, Soca Village,

[184] This is the title of a popular soca by Machel Montano sung from a male perspective, where the male sings of giving a female a little wine (pelvic gyration/sex/motion during sex) that she found so good that she couldn't let him go and wanted a relationship with him afterwards. See Winer, *Dictionary* "wine" (969). "Wine," is the English creole form of "wind" "move in a curve," "shake waist." It is first recorded first in the meaning "pelvic gyration" as "wind" in a quotation from 1916, and then as "wine" in another from 1928. Now it is ubiquitous in the Caribean and the diaspora.

[185] See Chapter 1 for a more elaborate discussion of Bouty and the other St. Lucians involved in the organization of carnival and its various events.

Ambassadors, Take Over Tent and NG Soca Stage, which still exist today. Each features calypsonians who compete to represent their tent at the quarter- and semi-finals for the Calypso Monarch. Each calypso is judged on lyrics, presentation, melody, arrangement, and rendition. Although seemingly innocuous, the criteria serves to promote a specific kind of calypsonian and discourage others.[186]

As discussed earlier, because of St. Lucian's imported calypso from Trinidad, songs considered calypsos had to adhere to Trinidadian standards of music, from using steelpan as a musical accompaniment to employing Trinidadian arrangers to put together the melody and arrangement common to Trinidadian calypso. However, most aspiring St. Lucian calypsonians had difficulty conforming to two of these criteria: lyrics and rendition. These two criteria focus on topical nuance, with heavy emphasis on word choice, and how the well the calypsonian articulates these words on the night of the competition. The problem at its root was language: judges presumed that calypsos would be in British English, and that the calypsonian would pronounce the lyrics with the precision of a native British English speaker. This was particularly important as the judges were often upper-class St. Lucians who had more familiarity with English and so could more easily comprehend the nuances of British English than French Kwéyòl. While Trinidadian calypsos which made it to St. Lucia were in English, over 85% of the St. Lucian public were more comfortable with French Kwéyòl, even though they had a working knowledge of British English. Those who were comfortable with British English tended to be of the colonial aristocracy or landowning St. Lucians, who would were

[186] See: "CalypSoca." *Luciancarnival.* Lucian Carnival, NA. Web. 5 Sep. 2012.

educated at tertiary institutions in England. As a result, only a small portion of the St. Lucian populace could participate successfully in calypso competitions.

The effect of mandating British English calypso lyrics in a country where most of the populace spoke French Kwéyòl was obvious in results of the early calypso competitions: the winners sang in clear British English, while the other contestants sang in English heavily influenced by French Kwéyòl. From the mid-1960s onward, *The St. Lucia Voice* has recorded the titles of calypsos that made it to the semi-finals, and up through the early 1980s every one of them is in English. Winning calypsos of the 1960s and 1970s include: "Teach me to do the Soul" (Mighty Terror, 1966); "You'll have to Wait" (Canary, 1967); "Some Women Nicer" (Mighty Pelee, 1969); "Jackass Transport" (Mighty Pelay, 1970); "Jump, Jump, Jump" (Mighty Pelay, 1971); "Ladies Fashions" (Mighty Pelay, 1972); "Popham '72" (Mighty Desper, 1973); "Independence (Prophet Haggai, 1976); "Don't Smoke Dope" (Mighty Prince, 1977); "Sweet Suzette" (Mighty Pelay, 1978) and "Sailor Man" (King Barrie, 1979).[187] Calypsonians sang a broad range of topics, including about women, but all songs are in British English, sung by men. This field provided the backdrop for the post-independence calypso competitions.

Concurrent to the calypso competitions were Road March songs which were faster and covered more salacious topics such as women's attire during carnival, "indecent" dancing, and local scandals. Prior to 1977, most Road March songs came

[187] "Calypso Monarchs." *Luciancarnival*. Lucian Carnival, NA. 8 Mar. 2012. Also of note here is that Mighty Pelay was involved in a vehicular accident soon after he had won his first two calypso competitions and was a paraplegic thereafter. He subsequently continued performing calypso from a seat in his wheelchair, becoming St. Lucia's first, and only, severely handicapped calypsonian. He went on to compete for decades more and died in 2011. At the time of his death he was legendary in St. Lucian calypso circles, not for his mobility issues, but for his contribution to the development of calypso in St. Lucia.

directly from Trinidad, with no changes. The bands would identify Trinidad's Road marches for that year, practice them furiously, and play that for St. Lucia's Carnival. Even in this realm French Kwéyòl songs were absent. Starting in 1977, St. Lucians sang their own Road March songs including: "Jump, Jump, Jump" (Pelay, 1969); "Popham '72" (Desper, 1973); "Don't Smoke Dope" (Prince, 1977) "Sweet Suzette" (Pelay, 1978). Because the first songs to enter St. Lucia from Trinidad were Road Marches, the idea of English, even in more "jumpy" songs, became entrenched in the history of calypso for St. Lucians.

Many post-independence calypsos concerned social issues that were plaguing newly independent St. Lucia, sung in British English, by men. Lord Jackson was crowned Calypso King when he sang "Proclamation" and "Guy Love Dance" in 1980, the year after St. Lucia became independent, and set the trend for future winners: one serious song and one "jumpy song," (party song) both in British English. Throughout the 1980s the all-male calypso competition produced songs in a similar vein: "Caribbean Unity" and "Mem Kon Arrow" ([Just like Arrow] Protus "De Educator" Auguste, 1981); "No Segregation" and "More Concern" (Lord Inferior, 1982); "Carnal Knowledge" and "Help We Father" (Ignatius "De Invada" Tissin, 1985); "Unborn Child" and "Learn from Them" (Desmond Mighty Pep" Long, 1987). Most of these calypsonians were middle-class. When they competed with calypsonians singing in mixtures of English and French Kwéyòl or straight Kwéyòl, they were always at an advantage because the interpretation of the lyrics and rendition criteria ensured that few French Kwéyòl speaking calypsonians got to the finals, no matter how popular they were with audiences.

However, because of the interest in French Kwéyòl in the late 1980s as an historical icon for St. Lucia, and the growing acceptance for its use in the broader society, the Calypso Association changed their rules so as to judge contestants singing in French Kwéyòl as they would those singing in English. And although seemingly positive, this ultimately did not help those singing in French Kwéyòl as the judges had difficulty understanding their accents and allusions, unless they sang very slowly, in an Anglicized tone. This again privileged British English accented St. Lucians. For example Desmond "Mighty Pep" Long won the Calypso Monarch in 1988 with "En Bas Gorge La" (Under the Throat) and "Vagrant." "En Bas Gorge La" is in a mixture of French Kwéyòl and English, but sung extremely slowly by a man who was completing his studies to become a medical doctor and who spoke English better than he spoke French Kwéyòl. He did this again in 1992 and won with "Bab Camawad" (Beard of my Friend) and "Rags to Riches." So, while embracing French Kwéyòl on the surface, the status quo remained: British English speakers were privileged, even when not singing in British English.

Having all these British English calypsos sung by middle-class males meant that the views they expressed were definitely gendered male, which meant that women were always discussed from a male perspective. One of the most popular calypsos of the 1980s was De Invada's "Carnal Knowledge." In this song he laments the increase of paedophilia reports in St. Lucia but blames the victims and their mothers for the reports saying:

> So mothers hold on to your children
>
> Be careful with de things you teach them
>
> And if you know they looking good

Doh dress them up to put man in de mood

And if you tink is joke ah making

Jus' check how much young girl they taking

So mothers hold on to your children

Cause carnal knowledge is a problem[188]

De Invada does what calypsonians are supposed to do, which is to highlight social ills, but does so from a male of the late 20th century's perspective. He places responsibility for a female child squarely on the shoulders of the mother, not the father. He says that the mother is to "be careful" of what she teaches her daughter, insinuating that the mother could be teaching her daughter things she should not know. Then he compounds his victim-blaming by admonishing the mother to dress her daughter demurely so as not to "put man in de mood," to excite the man and cause him to rape the daughter. And he grounds his admonishment in fact, alluding to how many young girls are being raped. In this song, De Invada identifies women and female children as *causing* the increase in rapes because of their dress and whatever their mothers are teaching them. Therefore, his solution to the problem is to tell mothers to "hold on to your [girl] children/ 'cause "carnal knowledge is a problem" caused by mothers and their girl children.

Although this calypso is not about a heterosexual relationship, it points to the marked gendered split between males and females, and how it was socially acceptable for St. Lucian males to blame females for an act committed by a man against a child. In this song, only females are rape victims, not males. But this song *does* indicate the St. Lucian

[188] De Invada, "Carnal Knowledge." Transcription by Ekeama Goddard-Scovel.

calypso standard that embraced Trinidadian gender norms: calypso concerned heterosexual relationships where women often committed some wrong against a man or sought his sexual prowess. In De Invada's calypso, whatever the mother is "teaching" her daughter is wrong. In his eyes, she is educating her daughter on how to use her feminine wiles to gain a man's attention, thereby creating the conditions for rape. The young girl gains the man's attention and he expects sex to be the end game. When the young girl says no, the man is upset, creating a situation where the man believes the young girl has duped him; hence "forcing" him to rape her. It is all her, and her mother's fault.

"Carnal Knowledge" covered the "serious" issue of paedophilia, and helped its singer win the Calypso crown, as other such songs aided their singers attain the crown. However, the other songs, which were "jumpy" or party songs, did not receive such acclaim. Many party songs focused more overtly on heterosexual relationships and how women often tricked men in a variety of ways. But these songs seldom reached the finals, and the few that did would seldom place highly because, based on Trinidad's calypso model, only topics that focused on serious issues were good enough to win. Party songs were popular at parties during the Carnival season, a trend popularized by Trinidad's David Rudder in the early 1980s.[189] But on the national stage, the songs achieved little acclaim outside of parties up through the mid-1990s, causing a seeming sublimation of heterosexual relationship songs until soca came along.

The sublimation of the heterosexual relationship to more "serious" national themes led to a subgenre of songs called "party music" within calypso music Caribbean-

[189] David Rudder, alongside Ras Shorty I, is one of the soca performers who made soca popular. He is credited as one of the instrumental people who advocated soca performers playing live at carnival parties.

wide. This group of songs found a home in soca music when it developed in Trinidad in the 1970s, and found a solid footing in St. Lucia by the early 1990s. In the explosion of music labelled *soca* in the 1980s, many of these songs focused primarily on heterosexual relationships and partying, even as its inventors insisted it was created to put a faster beat to more "serious" songs, a "seriousness" relationship songs were not considered to have gain, these calypsos were sung primarily by males, which meant that those relationship themes were skewed toward male actions.

WOMEN IN CARNIVAL MUSICS'S LYRICS

To interrogate lyrical content in Carnival musics in the latter 20th century, it is necessary to provide an overview the content of earlier songs. The research of of J. D. Elder and Gordon Rohlehr have helped me to construct an historical timeline of how societal conditions have helped to change heterosexual content in calypso, and by extension, soca. Writing about lyrical themes from the vantage points of 1968 and 1990, respectively, Elder and Rohlehr identify patterns that *should* have greatly interested Caribbean feminists. Discussion of the gendered social power at play in many Caribbean societies is noticeably absent in the last 30 years of Carnival music scholarship. What research exists has focused on: the "fat" body of the female calypsonian[190]; her own agency and that of her female audience[191]; and the relationship between the female sexuality and Christianity.[192] Few have sought to continue Elder and Rohlehr's research

[190] Maude Dikobe, "Bottom in de Road: Gender and Sexuality in Calypso." *Proudflesh: A New Afrikan Journal of Culture, Politics & Consciousness*. 3 (2004). Web. 12 Nov. 2008.
[191] Kevin Frank, "Female Agency and Oppression in Caribbean Bacchanalian Culture: Soca, Carnival, and Dancehall." *Women's Studies Quarterly* 35. 1/2 (2007): 179-190. *JSTOR*. Web. 3 Dec. 2010.
[192] Anna Kasafi Perkins, "Carne Vale (Goodbye to Flesh?): Caribbean Carnival, Notions of the Flesh and Christian Ambivalence about the Body." *Sexuality and Culture*. 15 (2011): 361-74. Web. 20 Mar. 2013.

by doing a critical lyrical analysis of the narratives of Caribbean women in soca, calypso's progeny.

By the early 21st century, although not in as large numbers as men, women in the both Trinidad and St. Lucia had created a niche for themselves singing calypso and soca. The preponderance of songs promoting heterosexual relationship themes again is the norm. However, the inclusion of women seems to have changed their trajectory from one where the male singer sings of the evil/misdeeds of the female to that of a tacit acknowledgement of female worth and power in a way that maintains the female attributes which privilege the male gaze. As a result, the songs now sung by many male soca performers, which still overtly assume male dominance, tend to contain themes of a male instructing a woman to physically "perform" for him or for other males.[193] Many soca performers urge women to "perform" actions or dances to their lyrics, urging the women to create a spectacle for the people watching, both women and men. But listeners and viewers often understood that men are the ones who should be enjoying this spectacle. In Machel Montano's soca "Bend Over" he sings, "This gyal, she wukkin up a storm /Watch how she perform /She so cold, when she wine and freeze /People stop and staring, got man on dey knees." Montano urges the audience to "watch how she perform," and then specifies that it's the men who are on their knees as a result of the performance. In this context, as in others, it is obvious that men are the spectators ogling the "performances" of the women who are assumed to be doing this to attract men. These

[193] See: Machel Montano, "Bend Over." *MetroLyrics*. Web. 2 May 2016.

context of these performances mirror that of Beyonce's, Rihanna's and Nicki Minaj discussed earlier, in that they maintain gendered norms.

Like their male compatriots, the songs of female soca performers follow the male example and also instruct women to do the same. But instead of warning women against performing, as perhaps Calypso Rose would have done, the female performers tacitly endorse the male example by showing how much they themselves enjoy "performing" for the men and encouraging other women to join them for a variety of reasons. Although some female soca performers claim that they assert female power when singing of "performing" dances that highlight their agency and sexuality, this claim is easily lost amid the overwhelming instructions by male performers which instruct women to do the same.[194] In both cases, the target audience consists of heterosexual males and either kind of song encourages women to be the spectacle and the men the spectators. Seldom does the female soca performer overtly critique these entrenched themes because they consciously understand that to do this is to commit professional suicide.

The lyrics of the soca songs by St. Lucian females reveal the ongoing struggle to simultaneously conform to the rigid thematic expectations of soca, and the expectations that *strongly encourage* female performers to sing about "feminist" themes and issues. And if they sing about the same themes as the men (e.g. heterosexual relationships), the expectation is that their lyrics should uphold or validate what the males sing.

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[194] A soca song sung by a woman which urges Caribbean women to embrace their sexuality and sexual agency is "Roll It Gyal" by Alison Hinds. In the song she urges women to "roll it gyal /control it gyal," essentially to control their wining and thus themselves and their lives. Very positive and empowering lyrics. However, urging women to dance is also what male soca performers do. And in the video for this song, wining women are shown in a variety of positions, similar to the images shown in soca videos by men which ask women to 'perform' for them.

Without explicitly saying so, Elder's and Rohlehr's contributions highlight the power of the person with the microphone (usually male) against those without it (usually female), in a way that simulates, according to Attali, the "systems of power [music] serves."[195] The power to represent mimics the "systems of power" that enable it. Rohlehr and Elder both make the point that themes concerning women abound in popular Carnival music extending far back into the 1800s. Although they do not express it similarly, Rohlehr and Elder's cumulative research *does* point to the patriarchal power invested in the gender that wields the microphone and belts out the lyrics (male subjects) and the objectified gender lacking power to combat the lyrics in kind (female objects).

The replication of power in Trinidadian society through the lyrics of *caiso* of the 1800s changed markedly with the shift to *calypso* in the mid-1900s. In "The Male/Female Conflict in Calypso" (1968), J. D. Elder, a Caribbean anthropologist, offers a meticulous analysis of Trinidadian popular songs whose themes concern male/female conflict. He first identifies that 59 of the 104 songs sampled contain themes about male/female (heterosexual) relationships, then refines his search by ferreting out which were the positive and negative themes sung about each sex. After doing his, he concentrates on negative themes for each sex and finds that, prior to the 1940s, "the female figure as theme predominates over the whole calypso tradition. In the newer sector [after the 1940s] of the tradition this figure has been steadily decreasing."[196]Here Elder notes that before the 1940s a significant number of all popular songs in Trinidad concerned women, but that afterward this number decreased. He cites some reasons for this change, one of

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[195] Attali, *Noise* 24.
[196] J. C. Elder, "The Male/Female Conflict in Calypso." *Caribbean Quarterly*. 13:3 (1968): 23-41 at 33.

which is that "males are have been experiencing less and less aggression-evoking stress through frustration from the female-figure [and] has discovered for himself areas of endeavor in which he can be a male in identity without effective competition from the powerful female–figure."[197] Elder does not explain what the "aggression-evoking stress through frustration from the female-figure" specifically is, but later explains that "[r]epressed anti-female hostility underlies the aggressive derisive songs the calypsonians sing about women … [and inscribes] the female [as] the threatener of the male figure …. [who] provokes his anger by supplanting his role in the society."[198] Elder reasons that the male calypsonians' frustration has its roots in feeling that they needed to take the powerful women down a peg or two in their songs as a result of living in matrifocal families. This corroborates Elder's second statement that calypsonians now have other ways to exert their masculinity that have nothing to do with women. He essentially says the anti-female songs decrease because men now avenues where they feel no pressure to compete with females but he fails to mention the advent of women into the calypso arena in the 1930s such as Lady Iere, as Mahabir notes.[199] Although Elder gives no indication what those ways are, some of them will emerge later in Rohlehr's work.

However, this decrease did not mean a decline in frequency with which songs about women frequently included themes of "sexual jealousy", "magic females," and

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[197] Elder, "The Male/Female Conflict" 38.
[198] Elder, "The Male/Female Conflict" 37.
[199] Cynthia Mahabir, "Wit and Popular Music: The Calypso and the Blues." *Popular Music*. 15.1 (1996): 55-81 at 69. However, Rohlehr, *Calypso and Society* list her calypsos under "Lord Iere and Lady Iere" (587). He re first mentioned as performing together in 1944 (351) and were still at it in 1956 (444). Seee the interview with Lord Iere (Randolph Thomas, 1908-1974) in Liverpool, *From the Horses Mouth* 75-92. Lord Iere began singing for tourists the 1930s (80), then became a calypsonian but did not make it until he was joined by his wufe (Lady Iere) on stage beginning in 1942 (82). There is a photograph of her on 92a. See also Ottley, *Women in Calypso I* 98-99.

"pejorative accounts" of heterosexual relationships. Elder elaborates: "aggressiveness in calypso towards the female figure has increased steadily throughout the calypso tradition despite the falling rate of this singer-neurosis in the [calypso era]. Aggressiveness toward the female has consistently exceeded anti-male aggressiveness."[200] In spite of male calypsonians singing fewer songs denigrating women, aggressive postures against women in Trinidadian songs continued to rise. Therefore, at the same time that calypso spread throughout the Caribbean, and specifically St. Lucia, its themes reflected more aggressiveness toward women. This meant that the music whose thematic standards St. Lucians followed already had a built-in power differential between males and females in the lyrical themes and narratives. Moreover, in addition to absorbing Trinidadian song patterns, St. Lucians were also absorbing what Elder calls "personality patterns, values and attitude that [were] normative in Trinidadian society."[201] In effect, St. Lucia was importing Trinidadian cultural norms through the adoption of Trinidadian songs.

While Elder is concerned with a psychoanalysing why calypsos were so anti-woman, Rohlehr is concerned with how socio-political historical events combined to affect anti-woman sentiment in calypsos. Rohlehr's seminal work, *Calypso and Society in Pre-Independence Trinidad* (1990), extensively discusses "images of men and women in the calypsos of the 1930's."[202] Throughout this text, he identifies the transition of Carnival songs from "gayelles" to "ballad calypsos"[203] and delves more deeply than Elder into the social conditions at play in calypso's transitioning to the codified, modern

[200] Elder, "The Male/Female Conflict" 33.
[201] Elder, "The Male/Female Conflict" 39.
[202] Rohlehr, *Calypso and Society* 213.
[203] Rohlehr, *Calypso and Society* 214.

version that we know today. In considering the period of 1920 to 1940, Rohlehr recognizes "a growing concern for social and political issues and the calypsonian's self-celebration as a 'sweet man', a macho man in 'control' of several women, or a man who lived in the barrack-yard and could therefore impart intimate knowledge or its 'comesse' [messiness], scandal and bacchanal."[204] Here, Rohlehr articulates the major factors to which calypsonians were responding: national issues of societal ills and political issues, as well as the overt masculinization of the male calypso performer. It is worth noting that Trinidad's big push for independence started in the 1940s with calypsonians at the vanguard, singing about the ills experienced by Trinidadians under British rule and calling for self-governance, then later advocating different parties to gain leadership. Both were spaces in which nationalism and politics were gendered male and no women were overtly allowed, as was the norm in Eurocentric.

So, as Trinidadian calypsonians revelled in their power to effect national and political change, they also relished the rewards that power gave them within the community. As the voice of the country, calypsonians could chose to highlight whatever part of the community they wanted. The 'self-celebration' of their prowess and power over women then became a continuation of what Elder earlier identified as the propensity for calypsonians to sing anti-female songs. Building on Elder's themes, Rohlehr includes the following calypso themes that highlight the legacy of anti-female sentiment: the virtues of a woman; women's downfall; the old woman; the idealized woman: the white woman, the high brown woman, the Indian woman and the Indian feast; Obeah; the

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[204] Rohlehr, *Calypso and Society* 214.

battered woman; and the rebel woman.[205] From the titles of these categories it is clear that many of the themes common to calypso songs concern females. The lyrics Rohlehr presents show themes that primarily deal with heterosexual relationships in which the (usually) male singer consistently gets to frame events in the relationships. This means that the male is as the one wronged by the female. Seldom is the female a positive exemplar, except when the male is pursuing a version of the idealized woman. By the time calypso became even more organized in the 1960s and 1970s these anti-female themes were now "heard, repeated, regimented, frame[d] and sold – … announc[ing] the installation of a new totalizing social order based on spectacle and exteriority," as Attali states.[206]

Trinidad's initial foray into marketing Carnival musics came through performing in other Caribbean islands. In St. Lucia, the repetition of the songs started in the hotels for Eurocentric tourists and eventually wound its way into calypso events and to the wider populace. With the inclusion of calypso in the national Carnival Queen Show, those narratives became regimented for the St. Lucians in attendance, as they were framed as part of the national identity, which could then be sold and resold to St. Lucians in St. Lucia and in the St. Lucian diaspora as being uniquely St. Lucian. This is the context within which soca is born, which ensures that, in order to advance in the Carnival music world, the calypsonians and soca performers need to sing extensively on heteronormative themes informed by Trinidadian norms, which magnified whatever anti-

[205] Rohlehr *Calypso and Society,* 275, cites Elder "The Male/Female Conflict" in explaining that he is building off of Elder's work.
[206] *Attali,* Noise 23.

female sentiment already existed in St. Lucia. This poses a significant issue for women trying to sing in these fields.

As women became competitors in singing competitions, it became harder to ignore that the women could be as verbally aggressive in song as the men. In instructive soca of the 1990s, the themes started out being generally innocuous, with most themes about dance moves that both males and females could do. But as soca started being performed more commonly in the Caribbean diaspora, the lyrics shifted to exploiting female sexuality, by making a spectacle of women's bodies in the lyrics. So even as more women sang soca, the lyrical patriarchy became more overt by assuming a heterosexual male gaze for every song, creating a situation in which the women needed to accommodate, in lyrical theme and in onstage performance. This intersected with assumptions concerning the Caribbean female body, as well as notions of class, and heterosexual domination.

Rohlehr also reflects on Trinidadian Carnival of the 1880s, where "[s]candals from the lives of the ruling elite or burgeoning middle class provided a particularly choice source of calypso fiction."[207] He suggests that during Carnival, groups from different tenement yards would "battle" to prove which yard was the best. During this battle, men engaged in physical conflict using long sticks against each other while the women mostly engaged in a lyrical battle with representatives of the opposing "yards" by singing carisos.[208] Rohlehr believes that the change from calypso being a female-identified pastime to a wholly male-identified occurred because the Colonial police made

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[207] Rohlehr, *Calypso and Society* 215.
[208] See earlier discussion of jammets and poor class women participating in Carnival.

it illegal to engage in stickfighting. He reasons that since the males could not physically confront their competitors anymore, they took over the established female role and battled with words instead of sticks. This changeover coincided with the politics of respectability for the Black Caribbean female, as the emergence of respectable social groups for women sought to present a different image of Black Trinidadian women. It is unclear whether St. Lucia had similar traditions, or whether Carnival activities were gendered similarly to Trinidad's because carnival was not written about in the St. Lucian newspapers of the time.

As was true of calypsos in the 1930s and 1940s, so it is in the 21st century that "[i]n the process of fictionalizing domestic lower-class situations, calypsonians brought into focus the confrontation of males and females, in a context where both were battling for economic survival."[209] The legacy of Caribbean slavery showed its continuance in Trinidadian society. During slavery, men and women performed similar tasks in the plantation fields. This competition for jobs making similar wages has continued into the 21st century. As a result, men often found themselves in relationships with women who were financially independent and therefore had power in this relationship that had been the purview of the male. This often led to the perception by men that women didn't *need* them for anything but sex, and not economic or emotional support, which was antithetical to the European narrative of the man being the financial breadwinner and protector.

Throughout the 1960s and 70s, as calypso became codified around certain themes, party music was essentially pushed out of lucrative national competitions. So when soca

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[209] Rohlehr, *Calypso and Society* 216.

came along with the faster rhythms that were danceable, those who sang party music found a space where their kind of music was also lucrative. With the investment of the Trinidad business community, soca performers were able to reach regional and global audiences. But to do so, the content of their music had to change to appeal to global masses. Calypso's codification required that the content be serious (national politics, national social issues, etc.) because only calypsonians with serious content would advance in the tent and national competitions. Soca did not have that mandate.

Although soca started as an effort to talk to Trinidadian youth about serious issues, via a faster-paced musical form, those singing party music as part of their repertoire quickly adopted it. Soon, soca music *was* party music: performers sang at carnival parties, sang to Caribbean diasporic audiences, and performed at global music fests such as in Miami, Toronto and Notting Hill carnivals, with globally-known artists. According to Guilbault, the businessmen of Trinidad saw the lucrativeness of soca and organized a national ~~soca~~ competition for soca songs only.[210] These shows, while putting soca singers on a similar professional level with the calypsonians, also promoted the performers, and served as a springboard to international attention. It is through that interaction with global markets that soca's content was appreciably affected so as to be more palatable to the new diasporic audience.

So, while in the 1970s and 1980s calypso themes became less aggressively anti-female, in that same period soca became the repository for ~~those~~ songs whose themes, while not anti-female, were overtly concerned with ~~the~~ female objectification. An

[210] Guilbault, *Governing Sound* 188-91.

example of this in popular soca is legendary calypsonian Edwin Ayoung (sobriquet Crazy's) 1989 hit, "Nani Wine." While still fusing African and Indian rhythms together and seeking harmony between the races in Trinidad, Crazy's lyrics urge this togetherness around a dancing (wining) Nani. He tells the story of "Drupatee and she nani ….exposing culturally sweet musical harmony ….[as he implores,] "Nani wine (x5) /Nani wine down so (x2) /Nani wine down low (x2)."[211] Ostensibly urging the country to come together around music and dance, he nevertheless does so by gendering the body of the dancer as an Indo-Trinidadian woman performing a dance that was socially risqué. But as more women entered ~~into~~ the soca arena and took issue with these songs, the artists changed the songs' themes, positioning themselves as males observing or cheering women on to wine in increasingly spectacular ways. Again, these narratives prioritize a male perspective for a presumed male audience, even though both women and men listen to soca music. And again, the themes reference Eurocentric stereotypical interactions between men and women that Trinidadians expect, despite the realities that surrounded them. These stereotypes also intersect with general assumptions about interactions with 'island people' (black people) often presumed to be oversexed, most notably the women for their "rampant sexuality."[212]

As the "storytellers of the nation," Trinidadian calypsonians created Carnival musics *most* definitive narratives: It is therefore impossible to ignore the economic, gendered circumstances in which the calypsonian became "the poetic voice of ordinary

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[211] Transcription by Ekeama Goddard-Scovel.
[212] In Gregg's Introduction to *Caribbean Women*, she identifies Edward Long's, a Jamaican plantation owner in mid to late 1700s, written presumption that "The rampant sexuality of the Negro woman threatens the social and natural order" (21).

folk, transforming thoughts into words and feelings into music," as Mahabir elaborates.[213] In a society built on the precarious economic stability of former slaves, the gendered pressures of performing according to European social norms, which dictated that men should be the ones making more money in the public sphere while women should be limited to the private sphere, found an outlet in the Carnival music of calypso. As calypso was forced to change with the will of the society, its progeny, with less overt homosocial baggage, could more easily afford women a space to articulate the voice of the ordinary woman.

SOCA IN ST. LUCIA

Trinidadian soca was greatly influenced by the social, economic and political issues between Afro- and Indo-Trinidadians, which were underpinned by Eurocentric ideals of heterosexual roles. Soca in St. Lucia, though faced with similar Eurocentric heterosexual ideals, had a slightly different history in which respectability politics posed a large problem for women entering calypso and soca, even though women were highly visible in the local musical traditions of La Rose and La Marguerite flower festivals. Songs associated with these festivals are sung in French Kwéyòl, while calypso was sung in Standard British English. This meant that women who sang in French Kwéyòl had an even slimmer chance of success in the male-dominated field of calypso than their male compatriots. However, just as Trinidadian soca became a home for songs objectifying women, St. Lucian soca was similar, with the added dimension of accepting French Kwéyòl singers, which had the strange bonus of making it more socially acceptable for

[213] Mahabir, "The Rise of Calypso Feminism" 412.

St. Lucian females to sing soca. So St. Lucian females who sing soca, a musical form predicated on the homosocial and anti-female calypso, negotiate the issues of language, class and gender in order to be relevant in their industry.

It is at the intersection of these variables that St. Lucian female soca performers find themselves. Each performer has to navigate how best to follow convention in each of the aforementioned areas, so as to be credible to their local audiences, but they must also market themselves to foreign audiences. In order to do this, St. Lucian female performers have to be concerned with markers of class in St. Lucia and abroad (country of origin, language spoken, complexion, dress, etc.); gendered decorum/expectations for pop singers (what to wear on stage, size, age, makeup, sexuality, etc.); standard themes about women; and standard themes expected of female singers.

Prior to the 1980s, respectable female St. Lucian singers occupied placed of prominence in the flower sociétés of La Rose and La Marguerite singing folk/Kwéyòl music, not calypso. La Rose and La Marguerite are social groups which essentially mirror class hierarchies in St. Lucian society.[214] La Rose took on the perceived traits of St. Lucia's lower class of unruliness and "hotness," while La Marguerite other took the traits of the St. Lucia's upper class of staidness and orderliness. Currently, each flower society retains a festival day, celebrated on an annual basis as part of how St. Lucia celebrates its French Kwéyòl-ness: La Rose on the 30th August and La Marguerite on 17th October. And as with all St. Lucian festivals, music is part of the festivities. During these festivities, both societies have gendered expectations for male and female performers:

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[214] For a more in-depth discussion of these societies, see: Crowley, "La Rose and La Marguerite Societies" 541-52; Patrick A. B Antony, "The Flower Festivals of St. Lucia" (Undated pamphlet, St. Lucia).

men provide musical accompaniment and women provide the vocals to the musical instruments played by the men. Although some male folk singers are known, women traditionally provide the vocals.[215]

Female musicians occupied a very prominent position in St. Lucian folk music, which was popular in the city of Castries, as well as in the outer districts of Gros-Islet, Dauphin, Dennery, Micoud, Vieux-Fort, Soufrière, Canaries and Anse-La-Raye. And they sang salty, aggressive, and happy songs about issues in their local communities as Trinidadian chantwèls sang of issues pertaining to the barrack-yards they inhabited during the Jammet carnivals of the 1880s.[216] As Trinidadians sang of these issues during Carnival, St. Lucians sang about them during the La Rose and La Marguerite flower festivals. As a result of the large participation of women in St. Lucian folk music, it reflects a variety of issues and points of view, including that of women, and still maintain popularity today. Many involve heterosexual relationships in which the women clearly and craftily articulate issues from their point of view as 'good' calypsos do.[217] Even as St. Lucian folk music has hetrosexual songs whose lyrics disparage women, it also has songs disparaging men.

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[215] For more information on St. Lucia's flower festivals, La Rose and La Marguerite, see the sources above as well as Daniel J. Crowley, "The Shak-Shak in the Lesser Antilles," *Ethnomusicology*. 2.3 (1958): 112-15.

[216] See further Campbell, "Carnival, Calypso," 1-27.

[217] One measure of a 'good' calypso is the use double-entendres to provide levels of meaning that only the discerning listeners can grasp those levels.

An example of a song about heterosexual relationships from the point of view of a woman is "Anti Ko/Aunty Ko," in which the female singer spurns Edouard, her erstwhile suitor.[218] She sings:

French Kwéyòl	English Translation
Anti Ko	**Aunty Ko**
Chorus	*Chorus*
Anti Ko palé Edouard ban mwen	Aunty Ko speak to Edward for me
Anti Ko veti Edouard ban mwen	Aunty Ko warn to Edward for me
Anti Ko palé Edouard ban mwen	Aunty Ko speak to Edward for me
Lot cou-a nai voyè dlo cho asou-y	The next time I will throw hot water on him
Anti Ko palé Edouard ban mwen (x3)	Aunty Ko speak to Edward for me (x3)
Lot cou-a nai voyè dlo cho unlé-y	The next time I will throw hot water on him
Verse 3	*Verse 3*
Maman mwen mò é kité un mat-la ban mwen	My mother died and left a mattress/bed for me
Mat-la sa-a sé sel ki wichès mwen	The bed is the only thing of value I have
Eduard pasé é mandé un dòmi asou-y	Edward passed and asked for a rest on it
Lè é ka alé, é vlé mwen ban-li mòso	When he was leaving, he wanted me to give him some

The subtext is that Eduard is courting an unwilling female. He has tried to get her in bed and she has rebuffed his advances, but he refuses to take no for an answer. She is therefore seeking aid from older women in the community (the *Anti*-s) to force Edouard to cease his advances, otherwise she will take matters into her own hands and physically wound him. It is important to note that such a viewpoint is often absent in calypso

[218] "Aunti" is the anglicized version of the St. Lucian English Creole word "Tantant" for "aunt," as the *Kwéyòl Dictionary* highlights (211). Mon Repos Folk Group. "Anti Ko." Folk Songs of St. Lucia. *Kwéyòl Sent Lici*. NA, Web. 06 May 2016.

because women have been shut out of it for so long and are concerned about their music not being played or sold if they sing such songs. This is a point of view is also absent in calypso because of the anti-female perspective which proliferates most calypsos. But this is a common point of view in St. Lucian folk music.

The active participation of women in St. Lucian folk festivals is in stark contrast to how the perception of them singing calypso and soca. While it *was* quite a coup for a woman to be a renowned folk singer for either La Rose or La Marguerite, as Marie Selipha "Sesenne" Descartes[219] was, it was *not* a coup for a woman to sing calypso. This is due to the material conditions which gave rise to calypso music in St. Lucia, which were markedly different from what obtained in Trinidad. While repressive colonial measures outlawed the stickfighting that took place in Trinidad during Carnival festivities and precipitated males singing carisos, such was not the case in St. Lucia.[220] In St. Lucia, calypso as a song-form was imported from Trinidad for the benefit of the American and European tourists who, having visited Jamaica and Trinidad, expected such from their experience in the Caribbean. As a result, the first songs labelled "calypso" which were sung in St. Lucia, were songs popular in Jamaica and Trinidad which were performed by local St. Lucians who performed them for tourists at hotel shows. Therefore, when the calypso music form was imported, so too were the other trappings that had be codified in Jamaica and Trinidad: use of English lyrics; prominent use of steel pans; exclusivity of male only competitors; and aggressive anti-woman sentiments.

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[219] Marie Selipha "Sesenne" Descartes was locally known as the Queen of Kwéyòl music because of her active participation in the folk music of St. Lucia for over 40 years. See: "Marie Selipha "Sesenne" Descartes." *Stluciafol*k. Folk Research Centre. NA. Web. 6 May 2016.

[220] Campbell, "Carnival, Calypso" 1-27.

As a result of the aforementioned factors, it was difficult for many St. Lucians outside of the city of Castries to embrace calypso as it did not represent the normative experiences of music that St. Lucians were socialized to expect: French Kwéyòl lyrics and colloquialisms, folk musical equipment, women singing vocals, and themes that expressed St. Lucian society's concerns. By the time St. Lucians started to create their own calypsos in the late 1960s, Trinidadian calypso had been cemented into a homosocial space where women were not wanted and actively discouraged from participating. Moreover, the fact that the many males who initiated original calypso compositions were from the lowest rungs of St. Lucian society ensured that no "self-respecting" woman or their family would be caught singing calypso. And any woman who dared suffered much social backlash in her private life, consequences that Calypso Rose referenced earlier. It would therefore take until the late 1980s, after middle-class males started singing calypso,[221] for the first St. Lucian woman to enter the all-male calypso tent competition.

CONCLUSION

Calypso's insertion into the lives of all St. Lucians highlighted as well as challenged power plays already cemented in the society. In St. Lucian society of the 1940s and 1950s, hallmarks of power included being white or light-skinned, speaking British English, living in the Castries city centre and being male. Conversely, lack of power was associated with being Black or dark-skinned, speaking French Kwéyòl, living

[221] In a 2013 recorded interview with current and past member of the calypso tent Take Over Tent (TOT), the all male participants complain that the winners of the Carnival Queen Show receive better prizes then the calypsonians do. Though they do not overtly say this, it is obvious that they think calypso is more important than the beauty show and so they should get better prizes. To put this into context, in the last 15 years, calypsonians receive brand new cars, while the pageant contestants receive a combination of beauty products, trips, stays at hotels, etc.

in the Castries "environs" and in any other district, and being female. As a result of these forces, calypso entering the island as part of entertainment at local hotels, with lyrics in British English for an expected White Eurocentric audience, meant that it was situated within these already existing power structures. Moreover, calypso came out of the thoroughly British colony that Trinidad was at that time, where Road March calypso was part of the tourism product, sung only by Afro-Trinidadian men. This emphasis on a completely homosocial space for public singing was antithetical to St. Lucian singing traditions, where mostly women sang, causing a major disruption in the gendered fabric of the society. Consequently, anti-female sentiments embedded in Trinidadian calypsos covered in St. Lucia became part of the codified narrative of male-dominated calypso, giving St. Lucian women no opportunity to respond to the negative sentiments. This was an issue which, together with lyrics of British English and the association with white colonials, may have been largely responsible for the lacklustre embrace of calypso by the general St. Lucian populace.

Calypso's place as an event with the Carnival Queen Show, a Carnival event put on primarily by women and aimed at the colonial upper class and wealthy locals of St. Lucia, further cemented its association with the upper classes and distanced it from the general populace. Therefore, when St. Lucians decided to start composing their own calypsos, the underlying issues served to privilege male, British English speakers, singing anti-female songs, and to underprivilege French Kwéyòl speakers singing a mixture of songs. This was apparent in the fact that the calypsos which won both Calypso King and Road March competitions in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s were almost exclusively

performed by middle- and upper-class men singing British English titled songs and few had French Kwéyòl song titles.

Before the 1980s, men with French Kwéyòl accents had no chance of progressing to the higher levels of the competitions, but it was even worse for women, as any who competed ran the risk of becoming a social pariah. While Trinidadian women were socially barred from singing calypso music in public,[222] St. Lucian women were not because most music for festivals were sung by women and calypso was of little importance to St. Lucian society prior to the 1940s. Moreover, calypso was markedly different from the local singing competitions sung in French Kwéyòl, where women were the assumed to be the main singers, not the men. Therefore, the adoption of calypso into St. Lucian music festivals displaced a pre-existing, more egalitarian gender power structure for singers.

Many of the aforementioned issues diminished by the end of the 1980s, but some persisted in calypso and its progeny, soca. With the eventual acceptance of French Kwéyòl by St. Lucian society in the 1980s and 1990s, women entered into both the calypso and soca arenas. But the increasing internationalization of music and musical acts meant that they were now comparing themselves to renowned musical artists of colour such as Beyoncé, Rihanna, and Nicki Minaj, which limits the ways in which they can express their performance of Caribbean woman-ness and Caribbean female sexuality to already existing negative narratives of black women in the Americas. These conditions have led to female calypsonians and soca performers being very concerned about their

[222] For Indo-Trinidadians it was socially acceptable to sing Chutney songs, which were lewd and bawdy songs sung during pre-wedding activities to the bachelorette. See Mohammed, “Love and Anxiety.” 1-42.

public image and persona at whatever level of musical competition they sing. Although the acceptance of French Kwéyòl and the rise of women in calypso and soca have coincided, it has been much easier for French Kwéyòl speakers to enter into soca. However, St. Lucian women have to make strategic choices as to how to represent themselves and other women lyrically in a field whose allegiances to calypso mean that to be economically relevant, they need to sing songs that prop up the dominant masculine, heterosexual narratives still embedded in soca.

CHAPTER 3. THE RISE OF WOMEN IN ST. LUCIAN SOCA

> The entire history of tonal music …amounts to an attempt to make people believe in a consensual representation of the world …[i]n order to etch in their minds the image of the ultimate social cohesion, achieved through commercial exchange and the progress of rational knowledge.
>
> – Attali, *Noise* 46

INTRODUCTION

The history of Carnival music in St. Lucia has definitely been an effort to "make people believe in a consensual representation of the world" around them. Coming out of Trinidad's musical history and social context, calypso, recognized as *the* Carnival music, enforces a view of the world influenced by a musical tradition allowing only men to frame heterosexual relationships in the public sphere through the lyrics of their songs. This was markedly different from the musical traditions of St. Lucia outside of Carnival celebrations, since this festival held little import for most St. Lucians until prominent women organized it in the mid-1950s. St. Lucia's middle and upper classes embraced this patriarchal view of heterosexual relationships, ultimately spurring the government and other social forces to do the same, by adopting Carnival as an iconic part of St. Lucian culture in order to emphasise "the ultimate social cohesion" among the Caribbean islands wanting independence from Great Britain. With the commercial exchange of music,

musicians, and steeldrums between the islands of Trinidad and St. Lucia, audiences assumed the cultures were so similar as to be the same. It was the only "rational" conclusion that the tourists, colonial representatives and citizens of St. Lucia could make.

But what happens when the stage includes women? Female performers see a disconnect between this "ultimate social cohesion" that the music promotes and their lived realities. They then have to decide how to address this conflict, while still making money. Should they repeat the patriarchal narratives that they know will sell? Should they stand on principle and sing "against" this narrative, but be pigeonholed as someone singing about "women's issues while their sales plummet? Or is there another way? While older Carnival music singers still see their role as bringing the nation together, I believe that many newer female calypso/soca performers follow the status quo, but only up to a point. Some demand that men live up to the social edicts of being a "man," while others query women's complicity in maintaining patriarchal order. They sing songs that follow the patriarchal narrative, but also tweak it in others. In so doing, they appear to follow the accepted narrative in order to be commercially viable while representing their own lived experiences in subtle ways. Doing this disrupts the accepted representation of their world often seen in calypso's progeny, soca. As more women enter the soca arena and realize that the most popular heterosexual relationship songs demean or penalize the female while painting the male as the poor sap being fooled by the female, they shift the narrative to create more nuanced treatment of the theme.

For over 30 years, soca has utilized instructive lyrics sung primarily by men. According to Lorraine Leu, instructive soca refers to lyrics that ask the listener to

perform physical actions that the singer specifies.[223] However, for over 15 years Caribbean women have also been singing instructive songs for and to women, repeating themes about women similar to the men's, lending credibility to the narratives of women that male singers highlight. Their compliance in upholding the status quo narratives about women begs the question: How do the limitations of being a female soca singer from St. Lucia intersect with the options available to females of colour on the international stage? To answer this question, I trace the historical trajectory of three prominent St. Lucian soca singers. In so doing, I hope to demonstrate how female soca performers lyrically grapple with conformity in a musical genre whose themes are primarily heterosexual in nature, and where the man is often blameless and the woman blamed for relationship issues. I contextualize these songs in terms of themes female soca performers are expected to sing about, and how these intersect with class markers (skin colour, fluency with English or French Kwéyòl, etc.), as well as global expectations of Caribbean women singing Carnival musics to audience as diverse as West Indians, Americans, Canadians, British citizens, etc.

I use a feminist lens to investigate how three female St. Lucian performers respond to social and economic pressures in the lyrics of their instructive soca songs. Most soca songs in and out of St. Lucia moved from "serious" lyrics aimed at politicians and community leaders, to instructive lyrics aimed at all audiences, then narrowed their

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[223] Lorreine Leu, "'Raise Yuh Hand, Jump up and Get on Bad!': New Developments in Soca Music in Trinidad," *Latin American Music Review*. 21:1 (2000): 45-58, provides a framework for contextualizing "instructive" and 'smutty" socas. While instructive soca tells the audience to perform an action or series of actions, smutty soca usually tells the audience to perform actions coded, either implicitly or explicitly, as sexual acts. Here I use only the 'instructive ones as I feel that they more closely fits the type of music I discuss here.

focus to at women. It is instructive lyrics for women that are of paramount interest here because they commodify the spectacle of women's wining bottoms in a male-dominated field, at an historical moment when Caribbean people are creating a global identify for themselves via music. Though this image of Caribbean women is not wrong, it harmful to women of colour in and out of the Caribbean when this is the primary image of Caribbean femaleness that they see. And it is challenging for female soca singers because they must choose between making money singing these kinds of instructive lyrics or being labelled as a "women's issues" performer which brands them as "anti-male.'

Although the rise of soca production in St. Lucia 1990s coincided with a significant increase in female calypsonians, many did not sing soca. They instead sang the typical songs associated with female calypsonians: women-positive songs or male-"bashing" songs, which utilized themes of rape, spousal abuse, woman power, etc. The 1990s saw many of these women participating in the Calypso Monarch competition and making it to the finals including Black Pearl, Lady Lean, and Cheryl and Colours.[224] However, as many of their calypso/soca careers were short-lived since they moved on to other fields such as jazz, I have not included them here.

This chapter charts St. Lucian female performers' narratives about women as they engage the global music market, and considers how those narratives affect the lyrics and themes of their songs. The overview of Caribbean feminism and scholarship, which focused on representations of women in calypso music in the context of romantic heterosexual relationships (in the last chapter) form the foundation on which I trace the

[224] Because the focus of this dissertation is on women in soca, I have decided to spend limited time discussing the rise of calypso as a national "treasure" and a cultural artifact as little soca was sung locally and the little that was, was sung by men, not women.

change of soca in St. Lucia by analysing the lyrics of three songs from prominent St. Lucian female calypso/soca performers, who entered the field at different historical moments. The three artistes are Agnes Lewis (Black Pearl), Nicole David (Nicole 'Nicki' David), and Melissa Moses (Q-PID). Through this close reading, I hope to initiate a dialogue on the tangible impacts of working in a neoliberal world on the lyrics of the songs produced in such an atmosphere.

BLACK PEARL

Figure 5: Images of Black Pearl

As a female calypsonian and the first woman to win a soca Monarch Crown in St. Lucia, Black Pearl has shown longevity in the male-dominated fields of calypso and soca. Her relevance, even after 20 years, speaks to her versatility in St. Lucia's carnival music arena. Her lyrics are representative of an artist who is one of the first women to successfully harness her grassroots experiences to articulate issues pertinent to people of her class, while artfully rendering common themes in ways that highlight both class and gendered experiences of the average St. Lucian. Her use of the much-disparaged language of French Kwéyòl as her preferred medium, when St. Lucians still saw it as unseemly to speak at official events, marks her as one of the most influential female calypso/soca singers. In choosing to sing in French Kwéyòl or a mixture of British English and French Kwéyòl, she conferred validity upon a language labelled as a marker of ignorance and 'backwardness," while serving as an icon for the "*maléwè*" (poor) men and women, and doing it all with the consistent backing of many St. Lucian women.

Black Pearl's mother, who was a "*La Wenn Kwéyòl*" (Queen of Kwéyòl) of her community of Anse-La-Raye, introduced Black Pearl to singing publicly. The La Wenn Kwéyòl is a national pageant which is markedly different from the Carnival Queen Show in that its contestants tend to be older female French Kwéyòl speakers who have promotion of the Kwéyòl culture as their goal. Her mother's high profile in the community may have strongly influenced Black Pearl's embrace of St. Lucia's Kwéyòl culture from a young age. She received local acclaim for her folk singing, but did not think of singing calypso until her brother, Anthony Sylvester Lewis (sobriquet: Herb Black), suggested she try to sing in his calypso tent. Her first foray into calypso in 1989 garnered her a huge fanbase of working class, Kwéyòl-speaking St. Lucians, who saw

themselves reflected in her. Although many St. Lucians were supportive, she did not fit the image of the calypsonian that many in Castries were used to seeing.

Prior to Black Pearl, Madame Sequin and Cynthy were two women who sang calypso at the tents. Madame Sequin was from Castries and Cynthy was from the southern district of Vieux-Fort. Both sang in the 1970s, were from the lower classes and considered not to be respectable because they were women singing calypso and because they were from the lower classes who also spoke in French Kwéyòl. In the 1970s, the upper classes in St. Lucian society fluency in French Kwéyòl as stain on one's character and many parents, family members, friends and community institutions like churches, schools and the government actively deterred children from speaking French Kwéyòl. As stipulated in the last chapter, this changed after St. Lucia's 1979 independence when St. Lucia began to embrace French Kwéyòl as part of its heritage, but took some time for the general populace to embrace it. Hence, by the time Black Pearl started to sing in the late 1980s, the promotion of French Kwéyòl as "*lang sa nou*" (our language) was a boon as it meant that mores that obtained in French Kwéyòl culture were free to travel laterally to icons of British English culture in St. Lucia. Therefore, since society had now actively embraced French Kwéyòl music, a music in which many women were the main singers, Black Pearl coming from a respectable French Kwéyòl singing family was the first "respectable' woman to sing calypso (even as she were a lock wearing Rastafarian). This comes at a point when few women sang on their own and none got to the coveted Calypso King finals.[225]

[225] Black Pearl furnished much of this information in informal discussions with me before, during and after calypso shows she participated in between 2011-2013.

Through the 1970s and 1980s most calypsonians who sang and ranked in calypso competitions were from Castries, were male, Catholic, and comfortably fluent in English. Men who did not fit that bill, like Black Pearl's Brother, Herb Black, had a hard time achieving success as calypsonians in the early 1980s. He was from Anse-La-Raye, not Castries; was fluent in French Kwéyòl; very dark-skinned, which translated to poor in St. Lucian vernacular; and and to top it off was a Rastafarian, all of which counted against him. And all of which also counted against Black Pearl, in addition to the fact that she was a woman. Both Black Pearl and her brother had much support from the lower classes in Castries, and even more support from their community of Anse-La-Raye and people from the outer districts. Their status as "outsiders" because of where they lived, and because of wearing dreadlocks, meant that Castries calypsonians and St. Lucian middle- and high-class audiences had no idea how to interpret them or their music except negatively.[226] Black Pearl's high profile, visibly non-conformist entrance into St. Lucia's calypso arena is why more female calypsonians entered into competition after her.

Black Pearl was one of the first female calypsonians to overcame the established role of women in calypso performances as backup singers as well as circumventing the 'natural' order of how one got to be a calypsonian, also by singing backup or dancing. Both women and men sang background vocals for calypsonians. But calypsonians strongly encouraged women to see their role only as backup singers, while male backup singers could work their way up to being a calypsonian. As a result of not going through this vetting process, Black Pearl destabilized the accepted order of how to became a

[226] Their music often incorporated 'Kwéyòl' sounds and instruments and not Trinidadian sounds. Some instruments include: banjo, shak-shak, *gwaj* (grater), tambo bamboo, etc.

calypsonian, as well as bringing with her a measure of respectability for women singing calypso because she had support from her family and the broader French Kwéyòl speaking community.

Black Pearl is quite a popular calypso/soca performer, her main source of income actually comes from running a small bar in Marigot Bay, a community south of downtown Castries. She is not the only calypsonian to have a "day job." According to Cecil Charles, manager of Take Over Tent in St. Lucia, "[e]xcept for Invada, no other St. Lucian calypsonian is making a living singing calypso."[227] Because of St. Lucia's small size, calypsonians only have to perform a few times before most of the populace has heard their songs. As a result, to make a living from singing, performers have to play outside of the country, which Invada has done from the 1980s. Most other singers are not as fortunate and so sing during Carnival season and work another job the rest of the year, as Black Pearl does.

From the beginning, Black Pearl's songs spoke to the massive underclass in St. Lucia, as well as the issues that women in St. Lucia's society face. Coming into the national calypso stage in the late 1980s, nation-building narratives were the way many calypsonians got into the calypso finals. But Black Pearl's songs also tended to be woman-centred. Her narratives fit squarely within what Mahabir says are the goals of many female calypsonians, to "steadily dismantle[e] negative, male-based images of women as 'deceitful', 'dominant' and 'managing' by rendering women's lives more authentically, with the contradictions and paradoxes that characterize them."[228] Black

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[227] Charles, Cecil. Interview by Avril Emanus. 25 July 2013. Audio Recording.
[228] Mahabir, "The Rise of Calypso Feminism" 416.

Pearl's songs often put a face to the women who were also part of the new nation-state of St. Lucia. By singing of issues which often come out of her first-hand experiences as a gendered, classed citizen of St. Lucia, Black Pearl magnifies the voices of women, and men, who live in similar circumstances. In so doing, she serves as an example of a musician who "renders women's lives more authentically." And much of this was aided by her immersion in St. Lucia's Kwéyòl culture, where women's roles are more fluid in all aspects of life.

By singing songs which fuse both class and gender issues, Black Pearl stands as one of the most prominent female calypsonian/soca performers who is not pigeonholed as a women's issues singer. Although coming out of another song tradition, Black Pearl had to adapt her songs to the criteria that would help her win. She had to think about the criteria and expectations of the calypso tents and their audience when singing calypso and soca. Additionally, Black Pearl has significant control of the songs she sings because, unlike most St. Lucian calypsonians and soca performers, she writes most of them herself, sometimes with a co-writer. This means that she controls the perspective and treatment of the topic at hand. She often writes universal themes with a female/poor protagonist, which leads to her treating the topic differently from other performers. Her background in folk music also influences her lyrical choices, especially as she often writes about issues of her neighbourhood (Marigot) and uses them analogously to national issues. So although she does not reference national news stories directly, her themes still tap the mood of the country in any particular year.

Black Pearl's calypso "*Bouche Yo*"/ "Catch Them" (2002) is an example of keeping within the accepted themes of calypso, which prioritizes songs that reference

universal issues. However, while it is common in St. Lucian calypso to address these universal issues in the context of overt news stories reported during the previous year, she makes the topic very local and leaves the listener to make the link to broader issues. The main theme here is that thieves steal with impunity and sometimes with the complicity of the police. She uses her ethos as a small business owner in Marigot Bay to encourage the audience to join her lamentation and help find thieves, and keep the police accountable to the public.

"*Bouche Yo*" utilizes a mixture of French Kwéyòl and English, as the title hints. The verses are in French Kwéyòl and the chorus combines French Kwéyòl and English:[229]

Lyrics	**Translation**
Verse 1	Verse 1
Mwen fè on ti sòrti	I went on a little trip
Achté on ti tv	Bought a little tv
Mwen pa kay hont pou di	I'm not ashamed to say
Mwen pwan'y asoe HP [hire purchase]	I took it on HP [Hire Purchase]
Twa mwa pa sa menm pasé	Three months haven't even passed
Se vòlè-a ja antwé	The thieves already entered/broke in
Sa ke fè mwen pli faché	What makes me even more vexed
Bagay la pa menm péyé	The thing isn't even paid [off]

[229] Because St. Lucia's education programs make no effort to incorporate French Kwéyòl into the regular education program, it remains primarily a spoken language that only interested individuals learn how to write, often after they leave secondary school. As a result of this, there is little to no sources, online or in books, which consistently record the lyrics of French Kwéyòl songs throughout the years. Therefore, I wrote both the transcriptions and translations.

In "*Bouche Yo*," Black Pearl embodies the St. Lucian lower-class experience in a uniquely St. Lucian way even as it embraces calypso's roots in serious social issues and British English on "serious" societal issues sung in British English. She sings of robbery in a mixture of French Kwéyòl and British English, giving voice to poor people's issues, indicting the police while simultaneously urging the populace to help them and hold their feet to the fire; and hinting at the broader societal problem without naming specific instances or police officers as is typical of most calypsos.

Robbery is a significant problem for residents of St. Lucia's poor[er] areas. What complicates robberies in poor areas is that they are often committed by someone from the area and are treated in quite a blasé manner by the police. A small business owner herself, Black Pearl sings the song in French Kwéyòl, even though she performs her songs in Castries, where many people do not understand Kwéyòl as well as those in Castries environs and the other districts who speak it.[230] In so doing, Black Pearl helps change the way French Kwéyòl speakers are seen by the St. Lucian Society, much like how female soca singer Drupatee of Trinidad helped usher in a new era in calypso where there was more integration between Indo and Black-Trinidadians in the 1990s. According to Mahabir, Drupatee Ramgoonai successfully used soca to advocate for more interaction between the Indo- and Afro-Trinidadian populace: "[t]he content of her lyrics, while innocuous and safely ethnically Indian, widened the social space to accommodate publicly older-and younger-generation Trinidadian Indians in the calypso-dancing

[230] The center of Castries is the downtown area where most of the major business used to be located. Castries 'environs' consist of any area outside of downtown Castries. The main distinguishing feature of the environs is that the residents speak primarily French Kwéyòl and there are few businesses, outside of agriculture and fishing, to sustain the community.

audience. This was a critical step in the highly charged symbolic process of pluralising popular culture in a small but extremely diverse society."[231] In this case, an Indo-Trinidadian singer aided in normalizing Indian/Black interaction at carnival activities, which ultimately helped to integrate these two groups who have historically been at loggerheads.

Like Drupatee, Black Pearl shows that French Kwéyòl is not only for 'historical' folk songs, but also for the present, relevant calypso songs. Essentially, by the simple act of singing calypso in French Kwéyòl, Black Pearl is validating a language for many in St. Lucia who have been indoctrinated into believing that French Kwéyòl would 'prevent' them from learning English and thereby from advancing in life, as even having a French Kwéyòl accent limits job opportunities.

Giving voice to rampant social ills, Black Pearl dedicates verse one to the "*maléwèz*" (poor people) who have been robbed, urging, "*Si yo ja vòlè-ou, lévé lanmen'w/… lévé lanmen'w ho*" (If they have robbed you, raise your hand/ … raise your hand high). From the beginning, she seeks a rapport with the audience by asking those who have been victims of robbery to signal their victimization. She then narrows this experience to that of the lower classes by saying in the first verse that the speaker/commoner, who bought a television, was "*pa kay hont pou di/… pwan'y asoe* HP" (not ashamed to say/ . . . [she] took it on HP). For many poor people in St. Lucia, buying a television is a major expense that they cannot pay for all at once. To address this issue, and sell their goods, St. Lucian businesses use a lay-away programme called Hire

[231] Mahabir, "The Rise of Calypso Feminism" 423.

Purchase (HP). Buying goods on HP is a huge class marker, as those who are in the upper classes often take a loan from a financial institution or pay for these expensive items in one lump sum, instead of paying the high interest rates associated with HP. Much of St. Lucia's populace buys items on HP, and members of the community often see and note each other's purchases, as well as when the items are delivered. Local thieves also take keen note of these deliveries.

To go into debt to obtain a necessity is not taken lightly, but then to have the item stolen before the item can be paid off is horrible for anyone in that position. The chorus then pleads with the listener saying,

Lyrics	**Translation**
Somebody please call 999	Somebody please call 999
Yo pété koté mwen a	They broke into my place
Somebody please call Babylon	Somebody please call Babylon
Wave your flag if you see one	Wave your flag if you see one
Somebody please call 999	Somebody please call 999
Give de policeman a hand	Give the policeman a hand
Bouche yo (Bouche yo)	Catch them (Catch them)
Bawé yo (Bawé yo)	Block them (block them)
Awété yo, what, lea we stop dem one by one	Arrest them, what?, let we stop them one by one
Bouche yo (Bouche yo)	Catch them (Catch them)
Bawé yo (Bawé yo)	Block them (block them)
Awété yo, what, lea we stop dem one by one	Arrest them, what?, let we stop them one by one

The chorus highlights Black Pearl's cleverness when she urges residents and citizens to aid the victims and the police. She relays information about emergencies, showcases her roots, and tells civilians what they can do about crime. She starts off relaying St. Lucia's emergency number, 999, which many St. Lucians still have problems remembering because it is different from that of the U.S. The proliferation of American television stations and shows mean that St. Lucians absorb outreach meant to furnish American audiences with emergency information. Then, by calling the police "Babylon" (the Rastafarian name for police or the authorities), she reminds listeners that she follows Rastafarian ideals as many of the "*maléwèz*" do. She then slips in "Wave your flag," a standard phrase in soca songs, before pressing the police to do something about the thefts. Even as she shows her distance from societal institutions, she still urges the masses to "Give de policeman a hand" by urging listeners to *bawé* (block), *bouche* (catch) and *awété* (arrest) the thieves. Here, Black Pearl bridges the gap between the masses and the state by speaking on behalf of the masses while pressing the police to do their jobs and arrest the thieves. In this chorus we see the clever calypsonian/soca performer being the voice of the masses to the state institutions that are supposed to protect them and their property.

In verse two, Black Pearl sings of chronic unemployment of male youth, leading to petty criminal activity that goes unpunished. This is particularly important to small business owners and lower-class people, both of whom are often women. Blaming the male youth for the criminal activity, she says:

Lyrics	**Translation**
Verse 2	Verse 2
Jenn nonm pas vlè twavay	Young men don't want to work
So *yo ka kasé kay*	So they are breaking into houses
Sa ka fè san pèwèz	That is happening without fear
Mwen hayi a soutiwèz	I hate an accomplice
Won péyi-a moun ka soufè	Around the nation people are suffering
Yo pa sav ki sa pou yo fè	They don't know what they should do
Si ou sòrti apwézan ou fen	If you leave now, you hungry
Helen *ka vini kon laven*	Helen[232] is coming inside-out

She explains that the reason for all the break-ins is that "*Jenn nonm pas vlè twavay*" (Young men don't want to work). The gendered identities of the culprits is not accidental. St. Lucians commonly believe that it is males who burglarize houses in St. Lucia, especially since most thieves caught have been young males. Females, both young and old, are often the ones holding down steady jobs or creating small business opportunities for themselves. Even in common-law arrangements, women are more likely to work in more stable jobs than are significant others. As a result, many St. Lucian women hold the position that Black Pearl herself occupies: a small business owner. Therefore, the very real fear of young men burglarizing a home, often headed by a woman, "*san pèwèz*" (without fear) is a significant problem for many women. This is especially problematic because the thieves commit these home burglaries within weeks of the victim acquiring the product, indicating that they were aware of the purchase and were awaiting an

[232] I.e. St Lucia.

opportunity to steal it, whether during daylight hours or night. The thieves' brazenness often leads victims to believe that the thieves have "*a soutiwèz*" (an accomplice) in the area, or in law enforcement.

Added to this physical fear for women is the loss of expensive material goods bought on layaway. St. Lucian women often provide a significant portion of their family's income, if not the bulk of it, and the loss of an item that they have not yet fully paid off means that they are stuck with a weekly or monthly debt for something they no longer possess. This loss of debt is problematic for the broader St. Lucian society, as women make up a sizable portion of upper management who tend to spend more money. According to a 2015 global business survey, in 106 countries worldwide, St. Lucia ranks as the 3rd most likely to have a manager who is a female: 52.3% of managers are female.[233] Robberies depress the standard of living of many female-headed households and contribute to poverty in already depressed areas. Her lyrics also reveal the futility many women feel about these robberies when she says, "*[w]on péyi-a moun ka soufè/ [ek] pa sav ki sa pou yo fè*" (Around the nation people are suffering/ [and] They don't know what they should do). From the personal incident of robbery, Black Pearl links the plight of the masses to that of the nation as a whole. She identifies a national problem of robberies and explains that many St. Lucians do not know what to do about the situation. But she knows what to do; she instructs them with her chorus to "*Bouche yo … Bawé yo …*. [and] *Awété yo*."

[233] See: Ferdman, Roberto A. "There are only Three Countries in the World Where your Boss is More Likely to be a Woman." *Wonkblog*. The Washington Post. 13 Jan. 2015. Web. 17 Dec 2015.

Verse three serves as a forceful indictment of the St. Lucian public for not doing more to curtail these crimes, which severely affect all citizens of St. Lucia:

Lyrics	**Translation**
Verse 4	Verse 4
Lè moun vòlè Sent Lici	When people steal from St. Lucia,
PRO police *la di*	PRO of police does say
Gadé pou li en Venci	Look for him/it in Venci (St. Vincent)
Yo ka jwenn bon sans pou li	They does get good cents (money) for it
An chay lè nous self *sé djoumbi*	A lot of us ourselves are djoumbis
An working for cocaine money	An' working for cocaine money
Na di-ou sè on real *kwév*[234] *tjè*	I'm telling you it's a real broken heart (arrow to the heart)
Tjébé yo ek bay yo bun fair[235]	Hold them and give them a good beating

Using the specific instance of robbery in a small community as a building block in the first verse, and naming the culprits in the second, Black Pearl ends the song by evaluating the response of the police charged with ensuring safety of St. Lucians' live and property. She says that the response of the Public Relations Officer of the Royal St. Lucia Police Force is not to carry out any serious investigation, but to tell the victim to "*Gadé pou li en Venci/ Yo ka jwenn bon sans pou li*" (Look for him/it in Venci/ They does get good

[234] While the *Kwéyòl Dictionary,* defines "kvévè" as in to burst. pierce, puncture (121), St. Lucians often use the phrase "*kwév tjè*" to signal a broken heart or taking an arrow to the heart, as opposed to *kvévè tjè* which would mean a literal or metaphorical stabbing of the heart by a real or fictional person. Therefore, in St. Lucian Kwéyòl, *kvévè* is used as a stand-alone verb while *kwév tjè* is an idiomatic expression referencing love.

[235] "*Bun fair*" is a St. Lucian idiomatic expression meaning "good licks" or a solid beating. I read "bun" as "good," but I have had to invent the spelling of "*fair*," as a similar word cannot be found in the *Kwéyòl Dictionary*.

cents [money] for it). Tapping into the frustration many St. Lucians have with police responses to robberies, Black Pearl points to how impotent the response makes police seem when they say to search for the robber/the goods in St. Vincent, the island immediately to the south of St. Lucia where, reportedly, many stolen goods are hawked. But Black Pearl problematizes even this idea, saying "*An chay lè nous self sé djoumbi*/ An working for cocaine money" (A lot of us ourselves are djoumbis/ An' working for cocaine money). Since it is so common for thieves to be from the community, it stands to reason that the relatives and friends of the thieves will not want them caught and may profit from the thefts.

It is important to note the use of the term "*djoumbi*"[236] instead of "*maléwè*." Both terms can mean poor, but the condition of the person in poverty is quite different. *Maléwè* are usually people who are working hard to get by but still in significant poverty. They work menial jobs, rent houses/apartments, take care of their children, and St. Lucians generally think they are good, productive members of society. The term *djoumbi*, on the other hand, is usually applied to people who are poor, obviously unkempt and homeless, and who have drug addiction problems (primarily cocaine). St. Lucians assume that they will do anything for money, usually to buy more drugs, including stealing from family,

[236] The word "jumbie" is a pan-caribbean word originally meaning a "spirit of the dead" (cf. Haitian Creole *zombi*) and referring to a freeloader in Trinidadian creole (Winer, "Jumbie" meaning 3 (476). Because of St. Lucia's strong French Kwéyòl history, the articulated word sounds more like "*djoumbi*" and not the Trinidadian "jumbie." In essence, St. Lucians Anglicize the French Kwéyòl word and use both the Haitian and Trinidadian meaning. Djoumbi is commonly used to reference cocane addicts for two reasons: (1) their emaciated bodies make them look like the undead, (2) they often rob people's houses at night for money to buy more drugs, the same time evil spirits are commonly believed to be roaming, and (3) during the day, they beg passersby for food or money, earning them the label of freeloaders.

friends, and neighbours. Hence Black Pearl's indictment of the community at large colluding in the thefts by shielding the robbers, who are often part of their families.

In this final verse, Black Pearl articulates a benevolent as well as violent form of femininity that is common in St. Lucian folk music. While she says that "*Na di-ou sè on real kwév tjè*" (I'm telling you it's a real broken heart /arrow to the heart), she still advocates to the populace to "*Tjébé yo ek bay yo bun fair*" (Hold them and give them a beating). Black Pearl reveals a femininity that encompasses both benevolent and violent impulses. Whether the beating is for the thieves alone or the thieves and their accomplices is unclear. But she definitely feels that they should be punished for their crimes. In this song, though not making reference to her femininity, by using emotive lyrics, she invokes St. Lucia's feminine title of Helen of the West. Although this title is feminine, St. Lucia's historical name-sake (Helen of Troy) was also of noble birth. Here she implicitly positions herself as Helen (St. Lucia) rallying her children around her and urging them to deal with the criminals who visit this social ill upon them all.[237] In so doing, Black Pearl evokes other female calypsonians who portray themselves as "mothers of the nation" as Calypso Rose does.[238]

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[237] Robert E. Bell, "About Helen of Troy." *Modern American Poetry*. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Accessed 6 June 2016.

[238] Calypso Rose is one of calypso's most prominent female singers from the 1950s up until present day. Many of her calypsos position her as the mother of the nation encouraging her children to do right. She has a long list of honours and awards, from Distinguished Achievement Award for the First Triple Crown Calypso Monarch of the World by Trinidad Benevolent Society in 1978, to having a new hospital named after her (McCartha Lewis Memorial Hospital) in 1999. As a result of her success, high profile and respectability, many female calypsonians mimic her singing and writing style. See: Guilbault, *Governing Sound,* 102-11; Rudolph Ottley, *Women in Calypso I* (Arima, Trinidad: Script-J Printers, 1992), 1-28 and "Calypso Rose." *Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia*. Wikimedia Foundation, Inc. 21 Apr. 2016. Web. 6 June 2016.

Black Pearl enjoys a large local following, but this is not the case one she performs outside of the country. Although she does have a significant following in St. Lucia, the trend for popular carnival performers is to perform not only to a local audience, but to ply their music to a regional audience, and more lucratively to a global Eurocentric populace. And to do this, performers need to have a particular "look." Much of this look has to do with assumptions about where the performer comes from and what the "global audience" expects as a result. What this boils down to is that much of the countries that carnival music performers seek to sing in are predominantly White, and that has implications for the small diasporic Caribbean audience. The implications the broader Eurocentric community has about the Black female body influences the assumptions of even the diasporic Caribbean people living there and attending these Carnival events. This means that the Caribbean woman's Black body is interpreted in a particular light, leaving the artiste to choose between accepted ideas of Black women as the only options for presentation. It is important to remember that Black Pearl, as her sobriquet indicates, is a very dark-skinned woman. Now this, in and of itself, is not a barrier to her performing outside of the Caribbean, but add in her age (over 40), her locks, and her socially conscious lyrics, and she physically reads very differently from the Beyoncés, Rihannas and Nicki Minajs of the global pop music world. Mix in that Trinidad claims it is the originator of calypso and more specifically soca, and it is evident that St. Lucian female carnival music performers are even more constrained in their options of how they can appear to a global audience.

As a result of these variables, Black female Carnival music performers tend to adopt the appearance and style of the most well-known performers of the region, either

Jamaican or Trinidadian. As Jamaicans seldom sing calypso or soca, more often female soca performers look to Trinidad for performers to model themselves after. Such is the case for the next St. Lucian performer, Nicole David, who patterns her professional persona after Trinidad's Denise Belfon (sobriquet: Saucy Wow). But before getting to David, a brief digression to broader discussions of gender representations is in order.

GENDER REPRESENTATION IN CALYPSO/SOCA

To speak of representations of women in Caribbean popular music is to speak of masculinity. Male calypsonians who dominated the popular music of the Caribbean, calypso, shaped the genre of calypsos into a homosocial space. As Elder and Rohlehr explain, many popular calypsos reference women in a stridently anti-female mode. This negative reference became codified in calypso and, though not a foundational part of soca, quickly became foundational when jumpy calypso found a home in soca. When women began singing Carnival music, this narrative did not go away. Instead, the long-term heterosexual relationship song for the male calypsonian/soca performer has more or less disappeared, while for the female it is still very much in play.

The trope of the deviant woman is firmly entrenched in calypso as well as soca. In Trinidad, we have moved from Sparrow's "Melda oh, you making wedding plans, / carrying meh name to obeah man" to Montano's "Give me one more wine." In Sparrow's 1966 calypso "Melda,"[239] Melda wanted the man to marry her so much that she resorted to dark magics to be in a stable, lawful relationship with him. His response was: "All you

[239] In 1966 Sparrow won the Road March title with "Obeah Wedding" usually known as "Melda." *Sparrow the Legend: The Calypso King of the World,* ed. Keith Smith (Port of Spain: Imprint, c. 1986), [15]. For the lyrics see *Sparrow the Legend:* [48].

do can't get through / I still aint go marryto you," indicating that she could never get him with Obeah. Fast forward to 2007 and Montano's "One More Wine" the woman gets addicted to his dance move (wining) and begs for "one more wine." He never officially responds to this thinly veiled proposition from the woman to have sex, but says that "She look good it's a natural fact … ./ She wining on the attack." From this response the audience assumes what will happen next. Essentially, the general male calypsonian response, instead of solely singing of the wrongs that women had done to men, was to "praise" women by objectifying them sweetly them in song.

In both songs, separated by over 40 years, the man is the one in control of the relationship but it is the woman who is painted as the aggressor against the poor man. The listener is encouraged to identify with the male as the woman uses her wiles on the singer. We should all agree with Sparrow's decision to throw Melda aside, without knowing what kind of relationship he had with her that may have led to her expectation of a marriage proposal. We are only to focus on the fact that this deceitful woman has resorted to Obeah to "force" him to marry her, and that he is brave enough to fight it and "lucky" because the obeah man, "Papa Niser / Is mey grandfather" who will presumably not go against his grandson's wishes. In Montano's case, we should also understand that he is not accountable for any expectation of a relationship with this woman, who we should assume he has only met that night and who he has engaged in a one-night stand. A closer analysis of the lyrics shows the woman "forcing" him to have sex with her since her "wining on the attack" made her irresistible to this "poor" man. Montano acquiesces and gets what he wants but has now had enough of her. But she persists in trying to have a long term relationship with him. Many listeners infer the contexts of these songs based

on previous ones and societal norms, which often depict scheming women as trying to "trap" naïve men into long term relationships. Therefore, both songs reveal a male performer controlling a narrative which depicts men as helpless objects of women's affections. In so doing, they insinuate that the women are deviant: Sparrow accuses Melda of dealing with the devil while Montano insinuates that the woman is using her body to lure him to have a more concrete relationship with her. The position of male calypsonians on heterosexual relationships has only changed in terms of degree.

With the advent of women in Caribbean popular music came a significant shift in the narrative of women articulated in these songs. It was not just that men found other things (national pride, etc.) to sing about, but that many female calypsonians responded to the denigration of women by calling men out for cheating, not taking care of children, not bringing money into the family, and not romancing their women. Female Trinidadian singer Nadia Batson sings the following lines in her song "Manager":

> You doh have a man
> Gyal you have a manager
> Them boys who does dictate all the pace
> like them is the boss ah yuh
> Gyal that is not yuh man
> Gyal that is yuh manager.[240]

Here, Batson uses commercial music terminology to critique the common narrative of males controlling the women in their lives. Unlike Black Pearl's song, Batson's fits

[240] From Trinidadian Nadia Batson's "Manager" (2013).

effortlessly into that of song on "women's issues." Singing of the Caribbean male's seeming need for control of their significant other, Batson highlights the female's experience, in which only the view of the male calypsonian were represented. In response to such songs, and instead of singing of positive heterosexual relationships, male calypsonians now objectify the female body, 'encouraging' her to "make your waist line wuk up,"[241] "Bend down low"[242] or to do the "six-thirty."[243] In effect, breaking women down to their body parts and the actions they perform for the attention of an assumed male audience.

The next two songs by Nicole David and Q-PID both fit readily into that of "women's issues" songs. They narrate heterosexual relationships, but in significantly different ways. While Nicole David laments having to turn to a "Mr. Dean Dough," Q-PID returns to the trope of the woman to 'ties' a man to her by using Obeah. In both songs we see the singers struggle with social mores that coded into the popular music of the Caribbean.

[241] From Barbadian Marzville's "Dutty Wuk Up" (2014).
[242] From St. Lucian Invada's "Bend Down Low" (1990).
[243] From Kittian group Grand Master Band "Six Thirty" (2015).

NICOLE DAVID

Figure 6: Images of Nicole "Nicki" David

Nicole “Nicki” David, self-described, “St. Lucia’s Queen of Soca,” enters the St. Lucian Carnival music scene from a very background than that of Black Pearl. Born in St. Lucia in 1974, she soon moved to St. Vincent with her Vencentian mother, where she lived until she was a teenager. In St. Vincent she sang at a local church and in a group that performed island-wide. This means that she had little or no contact with French Kwéyòl and definitely does not speak it as her first language, as Black Pearl did. This information also highlights David’s early connection with formal Eurocentic musical training through the church, and interest in popular music through her singing group and explains why she sought schooling for vocal training, which was not part of Black Pearl’s

musical training. When David's family moved to Canada after she had completed secondary school, she enrolled in a school of music while working odd jobs. Again, this contrasts with Black Pearl's history as a small business owner. After gaining the music degree, David became lead singer for a Toronto band and eventually performed "alongside many top Caribbean and World music artist [sic] and bands such as Sparrow, Crazy, Edwin Yearwood & Crossfire, Ronnie McIntosh, Iwa George, Denise Belfont, Miriam Makeba."[244] After performing with these popular Caribbean artists, David returned to St. Lucia in 1997 as the lead singer of the local band DN5 and performed primarily at hotels. After a short stint with them, she began singing on her own as the soca singer Nicole "Nicki" David.

Like Black Pearl, David's list of achievements as a female soca singer and local celebrity situates her as one of the most popular female singers and actors in St. Lucia. Just as Black Pearl was the first women to win the Soca Monarch competition, in 2005 David was the first female to win St. Lucia's Road March title with the song "Queen of the Jungle." But her accolades transcend the soca stage, as she headlined "at the 2009 St. Lucia Jazz Festival … as part of the Divas ensemble," and also received commendation for her "contribution to the development of calypso, chutney, zouk and soca in the English speaking Caribbean" from the Institute of Gender and Development Studies.[245]

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[244] Information on this soca artiste was difficult to source from the U.S. Between the two web articles below, I was able to piece together a more comprehensive overview of David's life. The first article, dated 2007, was the earliest on David's start in singing, with a small biography of her life before becoming a soca singer. Since it is not vetted by the singer, or published in a reputable news outlet or journal, I was hesitant to use it. However, some years later, Reverbnation, a more reputable source for musicians, produced a longer biography which corroborated much of the information in the earlier piece and added more up-to-date information. See: "Nicole David's Bio." *Lucian Madness*. Islandmix.com. Pubilished: 14 Apr 2007. Accessed: 7 Jan 2016. Web.; and "Nicole David/ Bio." *Reverbnation*. eMinor Incorporated. ND. Web. 6 June 2016.

[245] "Nicole David/ Bio." *Reverbnation*. eMinor Incorporated. ND. Web. 6 June 2016.

Additionally, in 2011, David started an acting career as a cast member in the locally produced St. Lucian Soap Opera: Island Secrets, alongside her singing career. These accomplishments point to David as an important figure in St. Lucia's music industry, as well as its fledgling media industry.

All in all, compared to Black Pearl, Nicole "Nicki" David had a more formal introduction to many aspects of public performance addressing diverse audiences. Through her experiences singing in the church, small bands, and taking classes in music David was better prepared to perform for the neoliberal moment where musicians were expected to be their own promoters to more cosmopolitan audiences. Moreover, negative language stigmas did not hamper David, as she spoke British English and not French Kwéyòl, nor was being among the few females to enter soca a hindrance to her as her prior professional experience commanded more respect from the male music gatekeepers in St. Lucia.[246] Additionally and importantly, unlike Black Pearl, she was 'brown-skinned' and sported chemically processed hair, both of which made her more easily 'readable' to a global audience, especially as she fulfils an acceptable portrayal of black Caribbean femininity, that of aggressive sexuality.

David's physical attributes gave her more options as to what kind of female soca performer she wanted to emulate, especially as she had performed onstage with one of soca's best known aggressively sexual females, Saucy Wow. This Trinidadian soca artiste, known for her skin-tight clothes, bawdy lyrics and penchant for out-wining men during her shows defines the aggressive sexual female associated with Carnival revelry.

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[246] By the time Nicole David entered the calypso competition in St. Lucia, Black Pearl was a household name, as well as other female calypso singers such as Lady Lean, Cheryl and Colours, Lady Spice, etc.

Known for her suggestive clothing and lyrics, Nicole David is the St. Lucian version of Trinidadian performer Saucy Wow. As the St. Lucian representative of the "happy fat woman," or the experienced or aggressive woman, Nicole David harkens back to the "jamettes" of Trinidad's calypso history, who verbally attacked gangs from other "yards" during stickfights or physically fought opposing gangs. In essence, these jamettes were the "ride or die bitches"[247] of the Caribbean, most of whom were poor women and prostitutes. With this persona comes the freedom from social constrictions, and therefore the ability to speak frankly of issues that had been the primary domain of male singers, such as female sexuality. However, Nicole David's lyrics play into the dominant narratives of soca performers who reflect the modified narrative of Caribbean women being naturally overtly sexual to males, therefore making it still acceptable to sing about women's bodies, but casting them in the role of temptress and the male as the innocent spectator or director/manager.

Although Nicole David's repertoire consists of many songs aimed at a male that she is trying to coerce into her arms or engage in a dance competition, her struggle to fit into the pre-set narratives of soca is apparent in some songs. Her more popular songs include "Put Your Waist Into It" (2001), "Bounce" (2005), and "Outrageous Wine" (2010). However, she does sing songs that contradict the dominant narratives of Caribbean women. One such song is her 2010 hit "Mr. Dean Dough."

"Mr. Dean Dough" narrates the story of a woman who has found the "perfect'" man. Inhabiting the image of the generic St. Lucian woman looking for a 'good' male

[247] 'Ride or die bitches' was a term popularized in the 1990s in the hip-hop and rap videos. This phrase was meant as praise for the woman who would accompany her "boy" (friend) into dangerous situations (riding alongside him) and who would, in case of a physical fight, fight alongside her "boy" until death.

partner, Nicole David lists the wrongs committed by men in heterosexual relationships, then praises Mr. Dean Dough as one who does not commit these wrongs. In the end, by being so positive in highlighting the things that Mr. Dean Dough does well, Nicole David implicitly indicts the men who do not do what Mr. Dean Dough can. This turns a "loving' song into a scathing indictment of Caribbean men who enter into heterosexual relationships with Caribbean women.

"Mr. Dean Dough," as well as her other songs, differ markedly from those of Black Pearl. David's songs adhere much more closely to the Trinidadian model of carnival musics. Where Black Pearl seeks to connect with an audience which is largely Kwéyòl speaking, David's target audience is primarily English speakers who have fluency in various English dialects. Although David sings primarily in English, her pronunciation is distinctly St. Lucian, and sometimes Trinidadian. While Black Pearl is concerned with national issues such as crime, David focuses on the party and relationship themes that are the norm in soca and calypso. Whereas Black Pearl's songs focus on class issues from a woman's perspective, David's focus on gendered ideas of femininity and the female body. And, importantly, while Black Pearl's songs voice issues important to locals, David sings songs that appeal more to the broader region and a global Caribbean diaspora. In essence, Black Pearl sings to St. Lucia's national audience while Nicole David sings to a broader, Caribbean and Caribbean-identified audience.

As a result of the disparity in experience and physical appearance, the reach of Black Pearl and Nicole David's music differs greatly. Because Black Pearl is fully part of the French Kwéyòl culture of St. Lucia and also embraces the counter-culture narrative of Rastafarianism when it was not culturally acceptable, her followers tend to mirror these

aspects of her personality. Her brand of "earthy" femininity highlights her primarily political and gender-conscious lyrics, her concern for how the audience views her stage attire is familiar and this feels comfortable to her audiences. Moreover, because of the racial history of most of the Caribbean, including St. Lucia, most poor people still overwhelmingly have dark complexions. Therefore, Black Pearl "reads" as "one of us" to those who share much of her background. David "reads" as the more generic "Caribbean woman" who often represents the Caribbean to the global community. She is English speaking, wears stylish locks, and is close to the "caramel" colour of Beyoncé, Rihanna, and Nicki Minaj. With David's propensity for wearing body-hugging and/short attire, she visually embraces her sexuality, fully playing into long-held views of the "hypersexualization of the fat female body."[248] Additionally, Black Pearl, who writes her own songs, has much more control over her lyrics, while David, even though she may suggest minor changes to her songs, has less control of her lyrics. As a result of these differences, David's reach is much broader than Black Pearl's. Her reach is international while Black Pearl's is domestic.

For each singer, there are benefits and liabilities to courting either a small audience or a broader one. By singing only to the core audience, the soca performer gains loyalty but limits the revenue that she/he could bring in. By reaching a broader audience, a soca performer gains popularity and money, but also risks alienating a core audience.

Nicole David ensures that she keeps the attention of both male and female audience members when she begins this song. Verse 1 begins with Nicole David petting

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[248] See: Andrea Shaw, "'Big Fat Fish:' The Hypersexualization of the Fat Female Body in Calypso and Dancehall." *Anthurium: A Caribbean Studies Journal*. 3.2 (2005). Web. 3 Mar. 2008.

the man with words, as one would do when stroking a cherished pet. She calls Mr. Dean Dough "baby," "chocolate", "brown skin", and "sugar daddy" (this particular term seems to be more of an endearment than actually referencing a man who gives a woman money). These words seem to romance the heterosexual male audience, lulling the listener to believe that this song is a ballad about the love of her life:

Verse 1

Listen

From da day ah met you boy

You made ma life so complete

Always dere right next to me

You're da perfect one for me

You never give me no stress

Feels perfect between my breasts

Stamina no one can tess

You know dat you are de bes'[249]

The narrator praises Mr. Dean Dough for making her "life so complete" and giving her "no stress," all aspects of relationships many women speak of a partner. Then comes an abrupt shift where he "Feels perfect between my [her] breasts." What part of him feels perfect between her breasts? The listener is not told, but that phrase is quickly forgotten when she goes on to speak of his "stamina" which the audience initially assumes has to

[249] Transcription by Ekeama Goddard-Scovel.

do with how long he lasts during sex. All in all, from the criteria listed in this verse, the speaker has indeed found the perfect man for her.

In the chorus, Nicole David continues praising her new love, saying:

Chorus

Mr. Dean Dough, oooh

You are da perfect one for me, oh oh

You always satisfy me, oh oh

You're ma sugar daddy, oh oh, oh oh

Dean dough oh oh oh, Dean Dough oh

Dean dough oh oh oh, Dean Dough oh

Dean dough oh oh oh, Dean Dough oh

Dean dough oh oh oh, Dean Dough oh

The lyrics of the chorus combine typical ballad sentiments and negative terminology about women in relationships that some commonly use as loving sentiments. The chorus reinforces positive sentiments when David says he is the "perfect one" and calls him her "sugar daddy." And, as Elder remarks, Caribbean males are very concerned with having their prowess as an exceptional sexual partner highlighted. Therefore a woman stating that a man "satisfies" her goes a long way to stroking the ego of the male listeners. Such songs also draw on the autonomous aspect of Black Caribbean femininity that Caribbean women sometimes revel in: that which "express[es] the lewd, bacchanalian side of womanhood – woman as seducer . . . Sexuality is deployed as cultural capital," as

Mahabir says.[250] (424). Exerting agency through one's sexuality, as well as insisting on positive heterosexual relationship, as David does here, is one of the ways that female carnival music performers show their feminist ideology, one complicated by longstanding stereotypes of Caribbean women.

In the second verse, David explains how Mr. Dean Dough is a paragon of virtue in her eyes. Taking on the common complaints that St. Lucian women have about their male partners, Nicole David sings the following:

Verse 2

Weda day or weda night

Mr. Dough does treat me right

When it comes to complainin'

My man is so understandin'

Listen girls and listen well

My belly will never swell

Lord dis man have nuf action

Wif guaranteed protection

The deviation from Standard English as well as the amalgam of enunciations from other Caribbean islands, is very apparent in this verse. Here, the St. Lucian pronunciation is apparent with 'th' being pronounced as 'd' and 'f', the lack of enunciation of 'g' in the 'ing': weda (whether), 'dis' (this), 'complainin' (complaining) and 'understandin' (understanding). St. Lucian grammar is also included: "Mr. Dough does treat me right."

[250] Mahabir, "The Rise of Calypso Feminism" 424.

Additionally, the Jamaican term “nuff” (enough) is used. This fluency with different variants of Caribbean pronunciation makes it easier for an artiste to have better connection with her broader audience, and speaks to the David’s dexterity with multiple Caribbean Englishes. Moreover, it makes her music a commodity attractive to a wide variety of audiences in the Angophone Caribbean and global Caribbean diaspora.

The theme of the song advances in this verse, but in a way which critiques males in heterosexual relationships from an obviously female perspective. Although the lyrics say that the man is “understandin’” about “complainin,’” there is no clue as to what this means. Is it that he doesn’t mind her complaining? Or is it that he does not complain to her? And complain about what? But next, David speaks of an issue that many St. Lucian women are concerned about when engaged in a heterosexual relationship: pregnancy. In saying that her “belly will never swell,” it is assumed that if a male and female are in a sexual relationship pregnancy is always a concern. But she says here that she will never get pregnant, then compounds the statement by saying “dis man have nuf action/Wif guaranteed protection.” Mr. Dean Dough is a sexual expert and will not impregnate a woman. It is at this point that many listeners start to understand who (or what) Mr. Dean Dough is: He is Mr. Dildo! With this revelation it makes sense that women need not worry about sexual satisfaction, pregnancy, or other relationship problems with Mr. Dean Dough.

Verse 3 identifies the virtues of having a “man” such as Mr. Dean Dough who is “perfect”:

Verse 3

No matter what time of week

Never tired, never sleep

Always respect all my needs

Nobody eh hornin' me

When it comes to worky worky

De man does drive me so craizy

No reason to wear no pants

All it is is jus' romance

Mr. Dean Dough is always sexually ready and is "Never tired, [and] never [has to] sleep." This means that he does not cry off sex with his partner, nor does he fall asleep after sex, as David essentially insinuates St. Lucian men do. Added to her boast that Mr. Dean Dough "Always respect all my needs [is that] Nobody eh hornin' me" is that he respects her "needs," and also does not sleep around with other women ("hornin').[251] During sex (worky, worky),[252] he makes her very happy by driving her "so craizy." David is so satisfied that she sees "No reason to wear no pants." Here, reality that the Caribbean female is often the breadwinner rears its head. Although Western ideals hold that the man should be the breadwinner, this dynamic has often been different in communities of colour in the Americas. This reality causes tension for many people in heterosexual relationships, especially as it is often assumed that the person who makes more money (the man) will automatically wield authority over the other person in the relationship (the

[251] Winer, *Dictionary* "horning" defined as "a sexual relationship outside an official one" (435).
[252] Winer, *Dictionary* "work," meaning 2, "give strenuous sexual exercise" (971).

woman). Additionally, women are often "stuck" with the children when the relationship ends, causing them to hold on tightly to monetary power. With access to this monetary power, Caribbean women have been socialized that men should have this power and often allow men to control the emotional reigns of the relationship instead because women's role is to "lift up" the man. Therefore, in St. Lucia, as in many other Caribbean islands, it is often the woman who has to "wear the pants" financially, while handing the emotional reigns of the relationship to the man. Even as these lyrics speak of the power of the woman, David acknowledges the man's emotional power in the romantic aspect of a heterosexual relationship.

By making this reference, David addresses an issue that many Caribbean males are sensitive to: being unable to attain one of the highest tenets of masculinity, providing monetarily for a significant other. This tenet of masculinity is particularly important in the beginning of a relationship when the man is expected to "romance" the woman by displaying his monetary acumen in various forms: paying for dinner, paying for drinks, paying for rent, paying for outfits to go out, buying jewellery, owning expensive cars, etc. If a man cannot do such things, then his only use is as a "sperm donor" (baby daddy) or someone who is sexually accomplished. While having many children is as a sign of manhood, taking care of the children as society expects a father to, is viewed as being weak or being duped by the woman. Many Caribbean males place these two tenets above other aspects of manhood such as being a father, being physically and emotionally supportive to the woman. As a result, like David, many female calypso and soca performers sing about needing the other aspects of manhood that men often ignore.

David also taps into the societally-sanctioned power relationship between males and females: males should have the most power and females should have less power. This power comes in both a physical and economic form. Males, generally assumed to be stronger than women, can assert power over women in many situations by threatening violence. Added to this physical power over women is the economic power that men can weld over women when they are the main breadwinners. However, in St. Lucia (and in the Caribbean generally), most women are on par with their male counterparts, making this economic advantage a difficult tenet to attain for men.

By referencing the fact that she has a *choice* whether to wear the pants in the relationship, David acquiesces to societal norms, but only when she can ascertain that the man lives up his end of the societal expectation. In so doing, she supports Elder's insinuation that Caribbean women are often economically independent and that instead of supporting the women, many Caribbean men want to usurp the perceived power of women in order to assert their dominance as society says they should. The way they do this is to assert their dominance socially and sexually; because men cannot provide financially, they grant or withhold their emotions in a relationship while also boasting that their sexual prowess is the most important asset they bring into a relationship. David, in turning to Mr. Dean Dough for satisfaction, is adamant that the roles that women need men to fulfil often go ignored by many men, to the detriment of many heterosexual relationships. She reveals a willingness to cede the reins of power to the man, if she can trust him to treat her with "respect" in the relationship.

In the final verse, 4, Nicole David hammers home the point by speaking frankly about fidelity within a heterosexual relationship, which comes across as shaming men into treating their significant others better:

Verse 4

Comin' home late (never do dat)

Sleepin' out (never do dat)

Lyin' to me (never do dat)

Cheat on me (never do dat)

Never ask for phone cad (never do dat)

Or money for gas (never do dat)

Never talk back to me (never do dat)

I in charge a de show

She starts by listing the issues she and many other women have with most men within a heterosexual relationship, a marked departure from the gushing love-words in of first verse. Her grievances include men having relationships with other women, as well as syphoning money in various ways. By "Comin' home late … / Sleepin' out …/ [and] Lyin' to [her]" David makes the case that the typical Caribbean man has "Cheat[ed] on [her]" and that that is the reason she turned to Mr. Dean Dough, who she can count on to never stray and lie about it. Moreover, by syphoning money from her when he "ask[s] for phone cad …./ Or money for gas," she intimates that he is using her as a "sugar mama," in direct opposition to the "sugar daddy" she mentioned in the first verse. Although it is now acceptable to women to have "sugar daddies," it interpreted negatively if a woman is a "sugar mama." And while paying for phone cards or asking for gas money is not

necessarily bad, the context is that the card is used to call the "outside woman" and the gas is used to "visit" her. As a result, many St. Lucian women believe that they are literally subsidising the outside relationships of their significant others. Moreover, when confronted, many males deny or "talk back," arguing that despite the evidence, they are being faithful. With Mr. Dean Dough, David never has to worry about these kinds of relationship issues because she is "in charge a de show."

As female carnival music performers, and more importantly as soca performers, Black Pearl and Nicole David came into the field informed by divergent cultural, material, and even political contexts. Black Pearl started singing publicly in French Kwéyòl in her local community before competing in the calypso arena and eventually singing soca seasonally, while operating a small bar in Marigot; Nicole David began singing religious and pop songs in St. Vincent, underwent vocal training in Canada, and there performed on stage with well-known calypsonians before coming to St. Lucia to start a career in soca. Their different entries into calypso and soca greatly influenced both the lyrical content of their songs and the audiences they sang to.

Lyrically, Nicole David's carnival songs use her exposure and facility with Englishes of the Caribbean diaspora to connect with a broader Caribbean audience, while Black Pearl uses French Kwéyòl to reach out to St. Lucia's "maléwè" for whom Kwéyòl is their first language. David instead uses a French Kwéyòl-based grammar, syntax and word enunciations common to many Anglophone Caribbean islands. Her target audiences, though they include the maléwè, are females in the broad Caribbean region and Caribbean diaspora. Black Pearl is clearly more concerned with specific local issues and frames her songs as national 'rise up' songs, urging the masses to perform an action

that will benefit both them and the country as a whole. David is primarily concerned with at once more intimate and more global matters. She regularly sings heterosexual relationship songs, which allows her to use codified soca themes and reach her audiences on a national, regional, or even global level. In effect, while Black Pearl seems to view her singing as an activity to benefit the nation, Nicole David is aware of her singing as a commodity which she can use to earn a living. This is why Black Pearl's job title is small business owner, while Nicole David's is that of singer.

Bridging the national VS financial approaches to singing between Black Pearl and Nicole David is a much younger soca performer, Q-PID. As a St. Lucian woman who matures in a more technological age, she fuses their approaches to form her own.

Q-PID

Figure 7: Images of Q-PID

In comparison to Nicole David and Black Pearl, Q-PID has a much shorter singing history. Shewas fluent in French Kwéyòl when it was firmly established as a positive in St. Lucian society, and was able to access the global technological boom through her links with the recording and management group Studio 758. These circumstances influenced her approach to Carnival musics, and especially impacted what she thought she could do as a French Kwéyòl speaking, female soca artiste.[253] But even

[253] Because soca performers often started as calypsonians who sang soca, it was difficult to find a term by which to reference them. In the mid-2000s the term "soca artist/e" came about, I believe to differentiate those who are calypsonians singing soca from those who primarily sing soca. Since soca is the avenue that Q-PID primarily uses, I will reference her as a soca artist from this point.

her embrace of the latest technological innovation, did not insulate her from negotiating around the anti-female sentiment which *still* persists in the *still* male dominated new soca sound.

Melissa Moses (sobriquet Q-PID) has been a soca artist for over a decade and has a background more similar to that of the elder Black Pearl than Nicole David. Born in 1979, she entered the national spotlight in 2003 singing the popular song "Water," and has remained a significant female soca figure ever since. As the youngest of the three female performers here, it is important to note that she is the only one who started singing in her early twenties (not younger), and the only one who sang soca before she sang calypso. Both Black Pearl and David had experience singing at younger ages, if in different contexts: Black Pearl in folk festivals and David in church, bands, and in more formalized singing education. This difference was due, in part, to where Q-PID grew up.

Like Black Pearl, Q-PID hails from an impoverished community. While Black Pearl is from Anse-La-Raye, a district about one hour from downtown Castries, Q-PID lives in a small community closer to downtown Castries, Foul A Chaud, which sprung up near the former banana shed where St. Lucia's Carnival Queen and calypso competitions were held until the late 1970s. While Anse-La-Raye has a very vibrant French Kwéyòl history and culture as seen in its lively festivals of La Rose, La Marguerite and Fisherman's feast, Foul A Choud residents do not enjoy the same history and culture. Being on the outskirts of downtown and near the docks, Foul A Chaud residents, though French Kwéyòl speakers, have celebrate no French Kwéyòl festivals that the Castries leaders do not endorse, and for a long time, they did not endorse any. As a result, the positive associations that Black Pearl had with French Kwéyòl were not at play, early on,

with Q-PID. Moreover, when Black Pearl started singing French Kwéyòl still occupied a shaky foothold in St. Lucian culture, positioning her "against" the norms of St. Lucian society. What *was* abundant in Q-PIDs surroundings was a more complete acceptance of French Kwéyòl and DJs using the latest technology to loudly mix songs from many different islands, especially Jamaican songs.

In the 1980s, St. Lucian DJs performed at most parties as the cheaper alternative to live bands. Many DJs came from the environs of Castries, including Foul A Chaud. Jamaican dub (dancehall's predecessor), filled with "toasting," where locals would rap over a music track of the most popular sound.[254] "Riddim," was en vogue, and this was especially prominent in Castries and its environs. Growing up in an area filled with this kind of music, it was no wonder that Q-PID "started writing songs at a really young age, long before [she] became an artiste [and now] write[s] all [her] own lyrics and also co-write[s] for other artistes,"[255] which is similar to Black Pearl who writes most of her songs, but dissimilar to David who sings primarily songs written by other writers. However, songs on riddims did not match the criteria for calypso, which said that music needed to be creative and lyrics needed to address "serious" topics. But this kind of music *could* fit into soca. And in the early 2000s, a few DJs and singers from Foul A Chaud

[254] Toasting is "the act of talking or chanting, usually in a monotone melody, over a rhythm or beat by a deejay," which was practiced in Jamacia from the 1960s onward. ("Toasting." *The Free Encyclopedia*. Wikimedia Foundation, Inc. 2 June 2016. Web. 29 June 2016) Copying the Jamaican deejays, St. Lucian deejays also toasted over ska or reggae songs during the 1970s and 1980s. This activity is now referred to as "rapping" and is employed over any kind of Caribbean music, as well as Caribbean influenced music such as dancehall, soca, grime, hip-hop and bouyon.

[255] This is an online website started in 2015, which provides information on St. Lucian calypso and soca artists in a journal style format. This has been the only source of in-depth information on this performer. Cecil Charles, executive member of Take Over Tent, is the Communications Officer.

entered the soca arena in St. Lucia, opening a new era for St. Lucian soca. Among these DJs was the now prominent Ricky T and, more importantly for our purposes, Q-PID.

So, though Q-PID had a more traditional start to her singing career, from back-up singer for local calypsonians and a band singer "on de truck" during the two days of "jump up on de road,"[256] her trajectory after that was informed by her exposure to a more varied music mixed by male DJs from her community. So, while Black Pearl, and Nicole David to a lesser extent, developed their singing in surrounded by both male and female performers, Q-PID developed her singing persona in the midst of the male dominated, technology driven DJ scene in Castries. As a result, she was not hesitant to use the forms of technology at her fingertips: singing to riddims compiled by St. Lucian DJs, singing onstage with DJs, using YouTube for self-promotion and planning her tour of 2014. And her professional relationships with DJs who became the vanguard of new soca sounds in St. Lucia facilitated her rise in popularity in the early 2000s.

Q-PID's popularity during a period when St. Lucians had access to the technological boom meant that she could use the budding St. Lucian riddim movement to launch her career as soca artist~~e~~. Although many calypsonians disparage soca artist~~e~~s for using riddims, saying that it is easy to create them unlike a tune for calypso, calypso writers like Zepherin "Face" Calixte see soca as making use of new technology, while calypso wallows in the musical instruments and bands of a rapidly going era.[257] In using

[256] Most calypso singers in St. Lucian start as back-up singers to other performers, then, after a few years, will strike out on their own as a solo singer. It is a way of learning the field at the feet of the masters and affords the new singers access to the older singers, who may give tips to help the newbies to move up through the ranks.

[257] This information came from a discussion with "Face" about the state of calypso music in St. Lucia in summer of 2013.

this new technology, DJs seemed to have discarded the idea that St. Lucian cultural musical sounds and local language of French Kwéyòl would not translate into a globalized world. Using synthesized sounds and samples of the banjo/quatro, conch shell, shak-shak, etc., St. Lucian DJs began mixing in newer musical sounds with folk sounds of St. Lucia, creating St. Lucian riddims. St. Lucians wholly embraced this music, embracing the accompanying English/French Kwéyòl lyrics. These infusions of St. Lucian-ness into soca also led to publishing these songs in a place the global market place could reach it: on YouTube.

YouTube provided the perfect platform on which to expose people outside of St. Lucia to St. Lucian music, with minimal financial investment. Putting music on YouTube meant that soca artistes could expose their music to a wider audience outside of St. Lucia, especially at a time when there are thousands of Caribbean identified people living outside of the Caribbean who would be perfect consumers looking for ties to 'home,' as many call the islands and territories that they trace their lineage to.[258] The views for Q-PID's songs on YouTube are between 8,500 and over 54,000. These numbers may not seem impressive in comparison to Beyoncé's "Partition" (10,151,656 views for lyrics only) and Rihanna's "Work" (394,137,740 views), [259] but they are significant for someone coming from a country with approximately 180,000 people, who have less internet access than is available in countries of the Global North.[260] Moreover, comments

[258] According to Kristen McCabe, "[t]here were 6.0 million self-identified members of the Caribbean diaspora residing in the United States in 2009." This indicates a large consumer base for Carnival music just in the U.S. See: McCabe, Kristen. "Caribbean Immigrants in the United States." Migration Policy.org. Migration Policy Institute. 7 Apr. 2011. Web. 24 May 2016.
[259] These are Beyoncé's and Rihanna's numbers as of 6th June, 2016.
[260] See: "Relieve Me Pressure" (2009), "Leave me Alone" (2010), "Push it Back" (2011), etc.

like "Good Work Guys - Real Lucian Talent, Big up Bumberlina,"[261] "dats HARD track...qpid jus continuin to do a good job," and "whats the name of that riddim?"[262] show Q-PID's core viewers' interest in her products, as well as her use of the latest riddims.

By embodying a popular, dark-skinned Caribbean woman, Q-PID has also broadened the scope of how brown or dark-skinned female Caribbean musicians can be, in turn broadening the global image of who is a Caribbean women. A dark skinned, athletically built woman, sporting a head of locks, speaking in a French Kwéyòl accent, is definitely not the image of Caribbean women that we see published in global magazines, journals or brochures. Rather, what is common is to see brown-skinned women like Alison Hinds, Saucy Wow, Rihanna, and Nicki Minaj, while it is common for dark-skinned Caribbean people to bleach their skin to look lighter by using bleaching cream.[263] It is also evident that many Caribbean people who have 'made it' in the music field, both female and male, have been "light-skinned" or "brown-skinned." Belinda Edmondson explains why this is the case, specifically for images of Caribbean women:

> Nonblack Caribbean women have helped to demarcate the public space in various ways: white and brown women have legitimized the movement of respectable femininity from the private, domestic sphere to the public space and the public gaze by performing a sanitized eroticism for public pleasure. The link between white women and corporate finance has in

[261] See: Comment by 2010 by EmpressViaa to soca video "Relieve Me Pressure," published by Davina Lee in 2009.
[262] See: comments by Slinkey1704 and Randy Sams consecutively to audio of "Macaroni Pie."
[263] Jamaican dancehall artist Elephant Man is known to uses skin bleaching cream to lighten his dark skin.

> large measure validated spaces such as the beauty pageants and the carnival competitions. Brown women made nonwhiteness, in the form of hybridity, into an acceptable nationalist symbol.[264]

Edmondson traces how colourism has reflected beauty ideals in the Caribbean and how colour coding worked to legitimize Caribbean women's move from the private sphere into the public one, complete with their non-Eurocentric habits. Here, she argues that white and brown Caribbean women have led the way in making it acceptable for all Caribbean women to enter the public sphere by "performing a sanitized eroticism for public pleasure" themselves. In essence, the actions attributed to dark-skinned women were 'softened' by white and brown Caribbean women for the patriarchal social elite, who controlled the finances for social and national events in which women participated. Edmonson argues that brown women made actions of "nonwhiteness," such as wining, acceptable as national icons. Therefore, female soca artists such as Q-PID can now aspire to perform on the global stage, as well as the local one.

In comparison to Q-PID, Black Pearl and Nicole David both are physically bigger than Q-PID at a moment when being thin and toned is a plus for a female artiste, and Q-PID is quite petite and toned. Being aware that her singing is part of global capital, Q-PID uses all of her assets to her benefit. So, while Black Pearl is very concerned with national issues and Nicole David links her singing back to a calling she heeded in church, Q-PID links her singing directly to the global marketplace, using technology and her physical attributes to sell her music.

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[264] Edmonson, "Public Spectacles" 15.

Though Black Pearl and David have online presences, theirs is to a much lesser extent. Although Black Pearl has been singing for over 30 years, few of her songs are readily accessible online. She has no professional website, YouTube, Twitter, or Facebook presence. This further attests to her view of herself as a calypsonian/soca artiste who sees her singing as a seasonal activity to benefit the St. Lucian society. Nicole David, on the other hand, *does* have an online presence, with many YouTube videos and audio tracks and an active Twitter account. Her Facebook page features a biography but is defunct otherwise, and is otherwise more or less silent online. In contrast, Q-PID's presence on YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, and a new St. Lucian online soca journal, ***St. Lucia Association of Registered Tents*** (S.T.A.R.T.),[265] place her in a better position to reach a global generation heavily connected by the internet.

From the time Q-PID started singing soca in 2003, she has strategically worked to become a part of the soca establishment in St. Lucia by competing in local competitions and using them as a springboard to inter-island competitions, and from there, the global soca circuit. Since her debut song, "Water," Q-PID has maintained a solid presence in St. Lucia's Carnival music by "deliver[ing] expertly crafted, no-frills, traditional socas seemingly immune to the vagaries of taste or trends."[266] Most of her songs fall within the popular instructive soca parameters, encouraging revellers to perform dances and sing along, ensuring a devoted audience for her product. With a foray into calypso, which netted her a spot in the finals singing "Woman" and "The Dream," she has an even more

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[265] As of 24th May, 2016 when one clicks on the link to this website, one is taken to a page which says "start productions has expired." I am unsure what this means and hope it will be back up soon.

[266] Soca songs in her repertoire include: "Water" (2003), "Take it Like a Man" (2008), "Leave Me Alone" (2010), "Haffi Come Back" (2013) and "Fire in Meh" (2012). See: "Qpid." S.T.A.R.T. Start Productions. 26 May 2015. Web. 1 Feb 2016.

varied audience because she has shown that she can sing more 'serious' songs. It is worth noting that this is the reverse of what most performers do as they sing calypso first, then go into soca as a side activity. Q-PID's strategic work paid off when she won the People's Monarch (2009); and the first person to qualify for Groovy Soca Monarch, Power Soca Monarch and Calypso Monarch in the same year (2013). By systematically collecting expected carnival music "prizes" and following the more entrenched themes of soca, Q-PID ensures a place for her music on a national, regional, and global level. Her process of working her way through the ranks of St. Lucia's soca scene to get to the global level seems to be the reverse of Nicole David's as she started her professional singing career in one of Canada's metropoles, and moved to a much smaller audience in St. Lucia.

Moreover, being one of the newer singers using the St. Lucian-made riddims that have been popular for the last decade, she is able to market herself as relevant to a broad Caribbean-identified audience which is much younger and more influenced by dancehall's terminology, sampling and creative mixing. While Nicole David has a global audience, her music still clings to the musical styles of the 1990s, where a band is usually necessary and the music is far from having the riddims of Q-PID's. Unlike Q-PID, David does not have the links to more DJ infused music technology that Q-PID does. Therefore, when the Leggo Me, Mosquito, Wahalla, Bidor and other riddims became popular, David had no songs which used them while Q-PID had a song every year with the latest riddims. Essentially, Black Pearl and David have been unable to adapt quickly to a changing music scene which is constantly looking outside of St. Lucia for consumers, consumers who are now increasingly diasporic Caribbean people.

Where Black Pearl's "Bouche Yo" (2001) highlighted power of the people on a national level and Nicole David's "Mr. Dean Dough" (2010) focused on the individual gendered power of women within heterosexual relationships. Q-PID's "I Do (Macaroni Pie)" (2010) speaks to female power facilitated by Obeah within a heterosexual relationship. While Obeah songs are not new to carnival musics, "I Do" represents an important shift within the topical compositions by female St. Lucian soca artistes, from "positive' songs about women directly against soca's established anti-woman themes.

"I Do" also shows a shift in assumptions about the global consumers of soca music, that they have some knowledge of soca music from different countries. Prior to the early-2000s, West Indians assumed that the global audience were White, conservative, Eurocentric people who had no context for Carnival musics. Therefore, they felt they needed to craft the songs in a way in which this audience would be comfortable.[267] By singing of the theme of Obeah, Q-PID expands the realm of "international" audiences to include diasporic West Indians who often have similar customs. Hence, singing of the St. Lucian context merely serves as an example of the larger West Indian context in which women complain of a common gripe when a man finds the woman he wants to marry: that the man may undergo changes which cause his family and friends to be bewildered. However, though Q-PID structures the song as any other soca about Obeah used within a heterosexual relationship would, she changes the end. In so doing, I see her struggle to seem as though she is at once acquiescing to soca

[267] For example, many songs targeted to areas outside the Caribbean region tended to contain veiled sexual metaphors or sound like advertisements for participating in Carnival in one of the Caribbean countries: "Congo Man" (Sparrow), "Pump Yuh Flag" (Machel Montano), "Lucian Bacchanal (Oh Na Na)" (Ricky T), etc.

themes that often put women in the position of the wrongdoer. In so doing, she destabilizes the idea of who really has power in a heterosexual relationship, while highlighting some women's complicity in maintaining patriarchal order.

In "I Do," Q-PID positions herself as a wedding guest who is a friend of the groom who believes that the bride had "tied" the groom using Obeah. Through the memories of this wedding guest, we get the story of the groom's change after he met the bride. This trope of a woman using dark magicks to 'trap" a man into marriage is not uncommon in Carnival musics as Rohlehr explains:

> Since the assumption was that marriage was the zenith of a woman's life, it was felt that a woman would resort to necromancy (or 'negromancy' as it was often spelt) in order to secure a man's affection.[268]

Rohlehr then identifies a number of foods that women would put these potions into, e.g. cocoa, callaloo, okra, and soup.[269] St. Lucia updated these traditional foods to the more contemporary macaroni pie, a baked version of macaroni and cheese which includes herbs and vegetables. He then explains the narrative pattern common to Obeah calypsos:

> Obeah calypsoes evolved their own pattern and plot-structure (i) Woman uses obeah: (ii) man deteriorates and/or is tied/controlled, charmed, stupefied, reduced to a Zombie-like state. (iii) Inquisitive or compassionate neighbours and/or what little remains of his mother wit, awaken him to the fact that he is under an evil spell (iv) He defies the woman, denounces the woman, denounces her witchcraft and/or

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[268] Rohlehr, *Calypso and Society* 258.
[269] Callaloo is a type of leaf as well as a type of soup. This leaf, found in many Caribbean islands, is prepared differently in each island. See Winer, *Dictionary* "calaloo" (155-56) and the references there.

> fortuitously escapes. (v) He converts the experience into fiction, which is itself a form of ego-retrieval; a restoration of the devastated heroic persona.[270] (Rohlehr, 261).

Q-PID mostly sticks to this model, as her lyrics will show.

The song opens with a short skit of the wedding ceremony. The name of the bride (Vicky Manalot) and groom (Bertie Couyon) clues in a St. Lucian/West Indian audience to the character of the two people to be married. Vicky's surname, Manalot, obviously hints at being promiscuous as she likes 'man a lot,' while Bertie's surname, Couyon [*kouyon*], is the French Kwéyòl word for stupid. Non-St. Lucian and other Caribbean-identified people would hear the names and understand the English, but not the French Kwéyòl. However, from the context, they would clearly realize that Bertie is not too intelligent. In using both English and Kwéyòl words in the characters' names, Q-PID ensures that she can engage both English and French Kwéyòl speaking international audiences. Then the priest asks the congregants, "If there is anyone here today who has any objections, please state now or forever hold your peace." Here Q-PID's character softly stammers, "M-e, me/A-a-a-a I do."

After this introduction, Q-PID takes the unusual step in singing the chorus before going in to the first verse. The chorus reveals the taboo theme when Q-PID's character asks:

> *Chorus*
>
> So Vicky did you really, really ring de panty

[270] Rohlehr, *Calypso and Society* 261.

Did you really ring de panty

Did you wring de panty in de macaroni pie

To make de man say I do

A-a-a-a I do (x3)

I do (x3)

Q-PID informs the audience in no uncertain terms that one of the 'mysterious' ways of "tying a man,"[271] which is not explicitly articulated by other songs, is by mixing menstrual blood into food and serving it to the man. Though she does not explicitly name the fluid, most West Indians would know that the panty contained menstrual fluid. Ingesting the menstrual fluid supposedly creates a supernatural bond between the woman and the man who is the object of their affections, "tying" or binding him to her. This cultural knowledge is evidenced by an online comment about the song: "....i hear nuff girls doing that…trying to tie man down! i know a zickey woooosh tiied down my man ...mwe pwe (I took/fixed her)".[272]

The taboo Q-PID breaks here is referencing women's menstrual blood, a taboo common in many Caribbean, and other, cultures. In St. Lucia, women often refer to menstruating as "red car," "that time of the month," etc. It is also an aspect of women's lives that men should know nothing about, nor should they even speak about it. The same is true in many Caribbean islands, to the extent that most male calypsonians only go as far as Sparrow in "Melda," mentioning that the woman went to see an Obeah man to get

[271] See further Winer, *Dictionary* "tie" (896-97) and the references there.
[272] The commenter says that this is common and that she has experienced another woman trying to tie her own man. See: Tracy Francis, comment "QPID - I Do (Macaroni Pie) Dutch Productions." Ask I don't bite. Uploaded 7 Apr 2010. Web. 19 May 2016.

him. No specifics are given. And for a woman to reveal what most suspected is highly unusual. In "Menstrual Taboos, Witchcraft Babies, and Social Relations," anthropologist Elisa J. Sobo discusses "tying" and examines the use and importance of menstrual blood, among other bodily fluids, to poor Jamaicans. Her findings reflect much of St. Lucians' interpretation and use of menstrual blood. She says that fluids, such as menstrual fluid, can be:

> used to control the minds of others whose bodies they enter. Women, as a way to tie men to them and thus secure men's love and money, can use their menstrual blood in cooking.… [and that] Fed to desired husbands by aspiring insecure surrogate mothers or wives, menstrual blood works on grown men as blood works on a fetus. The incorporation of a woman's menstrual blood in a man's body to ties him to that woman just as shared blood ties an unborn child to its mother-to-be. As Shared blood ideally leads children to act lovingly toward their parents, so too should ingested menstrual blood compel men to act altruistically toward women from whom the blood comes.[273]

Since Q-PID says nothing hinting at Vicky's love or infatuation with Bertie, we can assume that she wants him for money, and will do anything to get that money. Sobo further clarifies that Jamaicans believe menstrual blood is integral to a woman's bond to the growing fetus, which will grow to have loving feelings for the mother. Therefore, anyone ingesting the same blood (a man) will have loving feelings for the woman

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[273] Elisa J. Sobo, "Menstrual Taboos, Witchcraft Babies, and Social Relations: Women's Health Traditions in Rural Jamaica," *Daughters of Caliban: Caribbean Women in the Twentieth Century,* ed. Consuelo López Springfield. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997), 143-70 at 154.

supplying this blood. Q-PID graphically makes public the specifics of a woman 'tying' a man to her, exposing the St. Lucian belief that it is done using the dark arts of Obeah. By asking whether the bride wrung her panty in the macaroni pie, Q-PID effectively accuses Vicky of using Obeah to tie Bertie and force him to marry her.

The first verse following the chorus describes Bertie prior to Vicky's influence:

Verse 1

Remember de day I cyan understand
Bertie was a youth with education
Raised with him family, strong religion
Big house, big car, big position
Then him start to run around plenty woman
Next ting you know now tings turn around
Since he met Vicky he want settle down
Vicky have him on lock down

Bertie is as the epitome of the upstanding young St. Lucian male. He is well-educated, from a good family, religious, and economically stable. And, like many young men with such an upstanding background, also "start[ed] to run around plenty woman," meaning that he had relationships with more than one woman at a time, all of which the guest seems to indicate is well within reason and therefore acceptable. Then "Next ting you know now tings turn around/ Since he met Vicky he want settle down/ Vicky have him on lock down." And because a playboy now wants to settle down, the general society, and the guest, assumes that a woman tied him. Moreover, having a man on "lockdown"

means that a woman has gained enough power in a relationship to "prevent" the man from sleeping around with other women.

In this verse Q-PID makes clear the opposing narratives that inform heterosexual relationships in St. Lucia. The male is encouraged to have "plenty woman" and to resist marriage to the extent that if or when he does, the society believes that his power has been wrested from him by the woman with whom he wants to settle down. In essence, his manhood is tied to remaining "free to roam" and once he cannot engage in roaming anymore, he is less of a man. Conversely, the female is encouraged to find that one man with whom she can settle down in marriage; she should go through serial monogamy heterosexual relationships until she finds the one. She is expected to "change" the man by enduring his various affairs with women outside of their supposed monogamous relationship for years until he stops "running around" with other women. If the woman is able to do this, she secures her womanhood. On the other hand, if she finds a man who immediately "changes" for her, she is promptly accused of using Obeah to wrest the power in the relationship from him and transfer it to herself. These two options make up the double-bind that St. Lucian women in heterosexual relationships experience. After all, no man would give up womanizing and the power it gives him in a romantic heterosexual relationship of his own volition. Or so a patriarchal society would have its gendered members believe.

Verse two further explains the heights Bertie has fallen from, using examples of Vicky's assumed power over him. The wedding guest continues:

Verse 2

Him go a good school

Bertie go a good college

Learn from de block so him full of street knowledge

Cyan understand how de man so stupid

Vicky own de house but him pay de mortgage

Just de other day he catch her with a man

He open he mouth, she beat him with a pan

Vicky still go to the police station

Vicky have him on lock down

The wedding guest's emphasis on Bertie's education is not an accident. In St. Lucia, though more common now, it is still unusual to have a tertiary education. The one community college in St. Lucia, Sir Arthur Community College (SALCC), is primarily a university preparatory school. In the last 20 years, it has moved to offering Associate's Degrees in some practical fields and more recently, offers three years of a four-year Bachelor's Degree through University of the West Indies (UWI) to part-time adult students who also work. Starting in the 1990s, females in those classes have outnumbered males.[274] Therefore, it is a coup for any woman to "find" a man who has gone to a "good college" beyond secondary school and is "full of street knowledge," meaning he is not only academically intelligent but can also protect her in socially awkward situations. In effect, he is a Renaissance man, intelligent and smart when necessary, but also physically imposing when the situation demands it.

[274] As of spring 2016 the composition of SALCC is females 59%, males 39% and "unrecorded" 2%. See: "Spring 2016 Statistics." Organizational Chart. SALCC. Web. Salcc.edu. NA. 19 May 2016.

Finding a partner who is intelligent academically and socially is also a common lamentation of Women of colour in the U.S. and England, where many of the international Caribbean audience members reside. Q-PID's description of what a "good man" is would resonate with Caribbean as well as Caribbean-identified women, helping to broaden the reach of her product.

But in the next line, the wedding guest tells the listener that she "cannot understand how de man so stupid." Actions indicating Couyon ceding economic and social power over to Vicky make him "stupid." St. Lucian society assumes that Bertie holds the power in the relationship: physical, social, economic, educational, religious and emotional. The listener has no information about Vicky, other that the likes "man a lot." Hence, the inference is that her power rests only in the realm of "feminine power"/ poom-poom power: sex.[275] And by "wring[ing her] panty in the macaroni pie" she is amplifying that power to obtain all of Bertie's assumed power. Vicky has leveraged her sexual power to "own de house but [have] him pay de mortgage. This is a costly expenditure and means that if Vicky at any point wants Bertie out of the house, legally she can do so, because the house is hers. Many St. Lucian females face situations where, though they have lived with a male in a common-law relationship, they can be evicted and the male can take legal action against them if they try to return, because the house legally belongs to him. In a society where women are still the primary caregivers for children, this often means that the women take full economic responsibility for children because men expect that the children will leave with their mothers. As a result, ensuring that the domicile is in

[275] See Winer, *Dictionary* "bumbum, boomboom, boum-boum" (139) meaning "buttocks."

the woman's name is a common admonition that St. Lucian mothers give to their daughters. This often leads to conflict within the heterosexual relationship, as well as charges that the woman is emasculating the man.

The rest of the verse further demonstrates how emasculated the guest believes Bertie is because of Vicky's treatment of him. Listeners learn that Vicky has cheated on Bertie with another man, something that only a man can to do with impunity. But when he tries to argue, "she beat him with a pan." The guest here intimates that Vicky has emasculated Bertie to such an extent that she is the "man" in the relationship: Vicky has the affair, and she administers the physical punishment with impunity. Then Vicky calls the police and, using the assumption of the man being the aggressor, has him doubly on lockdown because he is now in jail for supposed battery.

Vicky's refusal to play by the conventional heterosexual relationship rules which confer power onto the male, make her the 'bad' one, especially patriarchal society. The members of a patriarchal society often identify with the patriarch, and the wedding guest is doing exactly that: she identifies so strongly with Bertie, the male, that she searches for proof that Vicky has wronged Bertie. In so doing, she reasserts the stereotypes of power in a heterosexual relationship: Bertie should have the power and Vicky should not. She has to "earn" it by first living with his indiscretions and then allowing him to "change" after she has suffered like many other women. So while, from Vicky's perspective, she has done a positive thing by "changing" her man, to many other females in the community, changing him makes her a bad woman. This is also reflective of Q-PID's position as a female in a patriarchal field who is advancing alongside the likes of Ricky T and other males who form the vanguard of the change in St. Lucian soca.

The fact that Vicky is being branded as someone using Obeah to tie a man by a female guest whose ideas are being sung by a female soca artist creates a tension in the reading of the song. Underlying the labelling of Vicky as a bad woman is her daring to change the power structure in which every other woman has had to operate. A woman singing about another woman using Obeah to tie a man usually means she wants the man for herself. But that is not the context of the song. Instead, the guest is indeed just a friend of Bertie and is searching for an explanation of why her friend has changed so drastically because Vicky's actions have disrupted St. Lucian women's "image of the ultimate social cohesion," according to Attali. Vicky has achieved what the other women have not, and normally both women and men would ostracize someone brazenly flaunting her usurpation of the norm. But Q-PID does not punish her.

Later in verse three, the guest identifies the moment she thinks Vicky presented the doctored macaroni pie to Bertie:

Verse 3

Early one Sunday as I pass by

Bertie in de yard eating macaroni pie

De man acting strange, de man acting high

Asked him a question he never reply

So de next day, I decide to spy

She washing she panty and making pie

Ask her de question but she deny

Vicky doh lie, tell me

On the holy day of the predominantly Catholic nation of St. Lucia, Bertie was "tied" by Vicky. As macaroni pie is a dish that requires much preparation, it is often prepared for Sunday meal. The guest says she saw Bertie eating the macaroni pie and "acting strange … high" because she "[a]sked him a question he never reply." And it is this behaviour that the listener is expected to believe is proof that Bertie is tied. The guest goes on to "spy" the following day and delivers the slam-dunk, proving that Vicky has used Obeah on Bertie. She sees Vicky "washing she panty and making macaroni pie [and]/[a]sk[s] her de question but she deny." But the guest obviously does not believe Vicky as she says "Vicky doh lie, tell me." in the mind of the guest, washing panties + making macaroni pie = man being tied using Obeah. She presents a "normal," intelligent, religious, learned man being stupid enough to sleep with only one woman, give her ownership of their house, and even allow her to send him to jail on false battery charges. All the scaffolding of the verses which came before serve to persuade the listeners to side with the guest.

The common trope of the woman using her feminine wiles to wrest power from a man permeates all aspects of St. Lucian society, as well as those of other Caribbean islands, and is a common trope in carnival songs. What may seem unusual is for a woman to be singing this song, which seems to perpetuate negative stereotypes of women. However, this song is by a performer who "delivers expertly crafted, no-frills, traditional socas," meaning her fit neatly into the genre's expectations with little critique or change. Q-PID is in the business of making music that sells, and this narrative is a popular one. And having a woman sing it makes it even more palatable to other females who sympathise with patriarchy and see other women as competitors. A female singing this

song may indicate how "impartial" the singer is, or may serve to uphold and reinforce gendered assumptions that the society has long held.

But the song does not end as others like it do, and it is here we see Q-PID's struggle with the gendered norms. Most songs like this tend to end with the woman in question being punished for her deceit. In "I Do" there is a post skit where the guest decides to speak up and publicly declare why the couple should not be married. But a male guest interrupts her thoughts saying, "Marriage her Father, marriage her/ I want to go and drink the cake, eat the champagne/Marriage her already/Do it, put the ring on the fingers, yes," and the woman says nothing. So the listener is left to believe that the marriage ceremony went through without a hitch, until the outro reveals some women speaking after the wedding saying, "She tie him, how you mean she tie him, how you lying so/ But dats what she saying, dats what the people saying dere /She say, she dat say dat Your friend dat dere." The women seem to be the ones convinced that Vicky has used Obeah to tie Bertie and coerce him to marry her, giving credit to Sobo's comment that "by supporting menstrual taboos and by perpetuating [the] belief in tying, women unwittingly participate in a patriarchal system of oppression that casts suspicion on their actions, limits their authority, and leads them to consider tying men to begin with."[276] In other words, by speculating about whether other women have used menstrual blood to tie a man, women uphold a patriarchal system that oppresses them. However, in Q-PID's song there is no penalty for Vicky other than the whisperings of her 'friends.'

[276] Sobo, "Menstrual Taboos" 158.

This ending begs the question: Why break from the formula right at the end of the song? Q-PID has stated that she writes most of her songs with minimal aid from other song writers. Who made the decision to end the song like this? What is the effect of this on the narrative? Do people listening even realize that the community does not penalize Vicky for her transgression against the patriarchy? The end indicates that Q-PID is shrewd enough to give the industry what it wants, but only up to a point. As someone who straddles the line between Black Pearl and Nicole David in terms of relevance to a global audience, Q-PID seeks more options than the role of mother of the nation or St. Lucia's version of Trinidad's Saucy Wow.

CONCLUSION

How do the limitations of being a female soca singer from St. Lucia intersect with the options available for females of colour on the international stage? This chapter has idenfified the historical context in which three of the most popular female soca artistes in St. Lucia entered the arena, and how multiple forces shaped their music and stage persona. These forces included fluency in British English or French Kwéyòl, social status, skin complexion, and use of current and upcoming technology. At the intersection of these forces is their identities as women singing in the male-dominated field of soca, which led to each artiste navigating these forces in the increasingly neoliberal arena of soca. I investigated how three female St. Lucian soca artists, Black Pearl, Nicole David and Q-PID, responded to their historical environments through the lyrics of their songs.

Black Pearl entered the Carnival music arena in calypso when St. Lucians still reveled in being a newly independent country, and even when she transitioned to soca her

themes continued to resonate with the call to of independence: togetherness. In "Bouche Yo," she sings of punishing thieves from the perspective of a small business person who speaks French Kwéyòl and is poor. Though her lyrics do not make overt claims about being female, her stage presence as a female performer lends a female viewpoint to the lyrics. Moreover, her French Kwéyòl accent, dark skin and position as a Rastafarian female when those were markers of cultural otherness heavily influenced the topics she sang, as well as affected her reception in St. Lucia and overseas. But, by becoming the first woman to sing serious calypso and also the first to win the St. Lucia Soca Monarch competition with a song incorporating French Kwéyòl into her primarily British English song, she became an icon to the masses of poor St. Lucians, showing that a woman who was counterculture on many levels could achieve success onan national level, even amid a patriarchal framework.

Following in her wake, Nicole "Nicki' David entered into St. Lucia's soca scene when performers sought to expand their reach into the wider Caribbean region. However, her trajectory seemed the reverse of what many soca artists were seeking: she left performing at events with more well-known calypsonians and soca artists in Canada for moved to the much smaller venues in St. Lucia and surrounding islands. She re-entered a St. Lucia which saw itself increasingly as part of a region who had the dissemination of Carnival music at the core of its togetherness. Not having the problems of Black Pearl, the British English speaking, fair-skinned, non-Rastafarian David was the perfect ambassador to disseminate St. Lucian soca music. While Black Pearl used her background to inform her stage persona, David looked to the commercially recognizable style of Trinidad's Denise Belfon (Saucy Wow) to fashion herself after. Singing of

female empowerment in a well-established tradition of the aggressive black woman, David set out to carve out a career in St. Lucia's soca scene. She did so spectacularly, and also achieved acclaim regionally, branding herself as "St. Lucia's Queen of Soca." But her appeal quickly became mainstream as her brand of soca did little to incorporate the latest musical technological advancements, and failed to recognize the shift to market to more diasporic Caribbean people, who could pay more for a ticket than consumers residing in the Caribbean could.

Q-PID definitely recognized the global Carnival circuit as the new market for her product. Although just 4 years younger than Nicole David, Q-PID started her solo singing career much later, and with some of the same characteristics as Black Pearl; however, at the historical moment she started singing, these characteristics were not a hindrance to her, as they were to Black Pearl. Like Black Pearl, Q-PID came from a lower-class community, Foul A Chaud, whose position in the slums of Castries provided a different context for French Kwéyòl speakers and access to technology. While Black Pearl engaged in cultural flower festivals, which embraced women in many ways, Q-PID had more exposure to the popular DJ culture of the 1980s and 1990s, which prided itself on access to the latest technology, as well as the latest popular music from different countries, especially Jamaica. As a result, Q-PID began singing amid a new wave of St. Lucian DJs turned soca singers. With a heavy emphasis on mixing St. Lucian folk sounds with more contemporary sounds, they became the vanguard of the St. Lucian soca scene, producing riddims and rapping over them in a mixture of the now-acceptable British English and French Kwéyòl. And because many of them came from Foul A Chaud and were compatriots of Q-PID, she was positioned to use the latest technology in her songs

to reach young disaporic Caribbean consumers who were more familiar with different forms of music, especially that of Jamaica and Trinidad. By singing over riddims inflected with St. Lucian folk sounds, Q-PID fused soca, dancehall, and St. Lucian folk music to create a sound at once uniquely St. Lucian and generally "Caribbean."

But even through this innovation, anti-female sentiment persisted in the lyrics of this new soca sound, as it still remained dominated by males. Therefore, Q-PID as a dark-skinned, female soca artist~~e~~ had to choose between producing the types of products that the males in charge of promoting songs would sell, which were mostly instructive songs focused on women's bottoms and telling female consumers how to move their bottoms, and the products labelled "women's issues" songs or anti-male songs. While mostly adhering to the familiar theme, she points to women's complicity in vilifying other women and upholding patriarchal ideas about the scheming woman, and she also denies the listener the usual resolution of the penitent or punished woman at the end of an Obeah tying narrative. In so doing, Q-PID shows an alternative way to respond to patriarchal themes in a field responding to global neoliberal pressures to create products that play into long established beliefs about men and women. Her struggle is emblematic of women's continuing effort to carve out a space for themselves in a music industry that Caribbean people are proud to say is a definitive part of their identity as a region.

CHAPTER 4. LYRICALLY SPEAKING – SOCA AND WOMEN

> Music is more than an object of study: it is a way of perceiving the world. A tool of understanding.
>
> – Attali, *Noise* 4

INTRODUCTION

Noted French economist and author of *Noise: The Political Economy of Music*, Jacques Attali's comment on music as a way of perceiving the world is particularly important to the interaction between genders in Caribbean Carnival music. Since the late 1800s, the role of women in Carnival music has increasingly narrowed. In the late 1800s, Trinidadian men completely took over singing of *carisos*, which women also sang, when the British authorities outlawed stick fighting.[277] As a result, by the early 20th century, Trinidadian society expected men to sing calypso, while women served as the brunt of sexist jokes and negative social commentary in calypso lyrics.[278] Through the mid-20th century, calypso continued its patriarchal existence, with almost no popular female singers. However, concurrent with the genesis of soca, more women entered the top tiers of the calypso arena in the 1970s, '80s and '90s but did not make their way to the soca

[277] See: Campbell, "Carnival, Calypso." 1-27 and Pearse, "Carnival in Nineteenth Century Trinidad" 175-93.
[278] See: Elder, "The Male/Female Conflict in Calypso" 23-41 and Rohlehr, *Calypso and Society.*

stage until decades later.[279] Hence, soca again relegated women to the sidelines, as it was initially was sung primarily by men about national and racial unity, topics commonly considered outside the scope of women's concerns. By the time soca became prominent throughout the Caribbean in the 1990s, it had morphed from a fast-paced Carnival music promoting racial and regional unity to a style that replaced the "jumpy" calypsos played at parties with a "jump and wave" version that encouraged its listeners to enjoy carnival time to excess.[280] Women *did* have a minor place in this musical movement as backup singers and stage performers but remained underrepresented.[281] However, by the beginning of the 21st century, a shift in soca's target audience from domestic and regional Caribbean to Caribbean diaspora precipitated a more prominent role for women in lyrical content, on stage and in music videos.

Caribbean women's wining posteriors were the main activity soca's lyrics highlighted. During Carnival, revelers are to flaunt social mores. In Trinidad's heavily Catholic society, social mores and religious morality applied to women more than men, therefore how vigorously women flaunted social conventions was a good gauge of how enjoyable Carnival was. And one social more that women flaunt during Carnival is the pelvic gyration called wining. Wining's immorality dates back to Catholic doctrine

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[279] Calypsonians and calypso commentators see competitions as a battle of words for supremacy and so often refer to the field as the "arena." Some of most popular female calpysonians from the 1970s are Singing Sandra and Calypso Rose, of Trinidad, and Mme. Sequine of St. Lucia. On Singing Sandra, see Ottley, *Women in Calypso I* 120-46.

[280] See: Guilbault, *Governing Sound* 102-111; Earl Lovelace, "Calypso and the Bacchanal Connection," *Music, Memory, Resistance: Calypso and the Caribbean Literary Imagination*, ed. Sandra Pauchet Paquet. Patricia J. Saundersand Stephen Stuempfle (Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 2007), 139-50.

[281] Rudolph Ottley's *Women in Calypso Part 2* (Arima, Trinidad: Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Gender, 2005) emphasizes the negative social ramifications for women who took part in calypso competitions in the 1960s and 70s when he speaks of Singing Sandra being shunned by her community to the extent that people would not go to her house or invite her to theirs, because she was a woman singing calypso.

mandating women not dance. Attali states that the Catholic "prohibited 'granting assemblies of women, for the purpose of dancing and singing'….something which we cannot allow even secular women to do: for according to Saint Gregory, it is better on Sunday, to toil and dig than dance."[282] (22). As former colonies with a long history of following the tenets and dictates of Catholicism, this edict had particular implications and ramifications for black Caribbean female slaves, and still resonates with their descendants. Thus, their participation in Jammette Carnival, dancing "obscenely" caused extreme censure.[283]

By the 20th century, this reversal of societal norms was especially attractive to black Caribbean women, who were often under more societal pressures than black men to embody religious piety and respectability in the eyes of the white/Creole ruling classes.[284] Carnival's level of success was often directly proportional to the level of public deviancy displayed by women during parties and street parades: the more "wild" women were in these public spaces, the more males deemed Carnival a success, even as the churches decried the lewd behaviour that surrounded Carnival activities. The most common way women upended societal norms was by singing lewd songs and dancing in a 'base' manner,[285] actions that became increasingly central to any "successful" Carnival.

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[282] Campbell, "Carnival, Calypso" 22.
[283] Black women were the primary targets of censure in the 19th century. See: Campbell, "Carnival, Calypso."
[284] For a more holistic discussion on the Caribbean woman's struggle for respectability, see: Peter J. Wilson, *Crab Antics: A Caribbean Study of the Conflict between Reputation and Respectability* (Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press. 1995).
[285] The history of Trinidad's Carnival and the role of women joining in the usurpation of societal norms by singing lewd and aggressive calypso is well documented.

In the 21st-century version of Carnival, women have little agency in its public performance but remain central to the upending of societal norms. At the same time that they occupy center stage in stage performances and are the focus of lyrics and music videos, few women actually participate in the development or production of soca music. The few women who are must often revert to the 'lewd' behaviour that the Trinidadian elite complained about in the 1870s, in order to create a "unique Caribbean product" for the new international audience consisting largely of the Caribbean diaspora, as well as what I will call "true" tourists. This commodification of the Caribbean has been ongoing since the 1990s, and has only intensified with the acceleration of neoliberal policies and imperatives. Therefore, Caribbean women, onstage or in music videos, perform "Caribbeanness" to a group estranged from their "homeland," thus helping to define what actions define Caribbean women, and by extension Caribbean men. In effect, the soca industry uses women's bodies to inscribe a Caribbeanness that treats the diasporic tourists, while simultaneously acknowledging their special "status" by virtue of their history and lineage. In so doing, this process entreats Caribbean diasporic women to revel in what sets them apart from the 'real tourists': their ability to perform certain actions/dances.

The result of this marketing strategy is an emphasis on lyrics and dances that highlight women's scantily clad bodies, and which overwhelmingly focus on women's bottoms/bumsies/spines/bum bums/posteriors/rears, etc. While women's Carnival performances have historically marked them as base, rude, dangerous and out of the norm, in the name of capitalism women "getting on rude and behaving bad" by breaking

social norms has become a prerequisite for a great Carnival. This is evident in the lyrics, music videos and stage performances of contemporary soca performers.

In this chapter, I first chart the lyrical change from non-gendered instructional/smutty to gendered instructional/smutty lyrics in soca songs from the 1990s to the early 21st century, by comparing some popular soca songs by prominent male performers of each era. I then analyse some popular soca songs by well-known female performers during this same period. In both the comparison and analysis, I identify instances of non-gendered and gendered lyrics of popular socas. I then connect these examples with major economic changes occurring within and without the Caribbean, whose impact exemplifies the growing focus on monetizing the black female body.[286]

SOCA INSTRUCTION, SMUT AND GENDER

Soca Instruction of the Late 20th Century

From the 1990s, soca songs have relied on "action" or "instructive" and "smutty" lyrics to get their audience to "move."[287] Lorraine Leu's differentiation between instructive and smutty lyrics in **"**Raise Yuh Hand, Jump up and Get on Bad!" offers salient definitions of these terms. She explains that

> this new generation of singers uses soca not as a basis for a dialogue with the public, but as an 'instructional' form. The dynamics of the song's performance depends on the crowd executing actions led by the singer, or echoing their chants. The fête has become an all important site where the

[286] This termed coined in discussion with Prof. Alfred J. Lopez.
[287] In this sentence, I use terms from the following articles: Leu, "'Raise Yuh Hand"; 15-58 and Gordon Rohlehr Rohlehr, "'We Getting the Kaiso We Deserve': Calypso and the World Music Market," *TDR (1988-)* 42.3 (1998): 82-95.

> collective gestures, dance moves, and accompanying cries, which are crucial to the success of the new song … Smutty calypsos make use of an elliptical sexual language of double entendres, which are variously humorous, as a kind of emotional response to airing of such subjects in public. *Soca however, is tending more and more towards a very direct sexual discourse* [emphasis mine].[288]

In making this distinction from the previous iterations of calypso, Leu calls attention to the shift from the call/response format, where the audience needed to have insider knowledge to understand the context and references in the songs, to instructive and smutty, where the audience needs no contextual knowledge to repeat a phrase or word. Hence, a form of soca more easily translatable to the descendants of successive waves of Caribbean disaspora has replaced both calypso and early soca. The change from a style of music based on "dialogue' with the audience to one instructing the audience is reminiscent of Attali's chapter, "Representing." Attali explains that: "When a class emerged whose power was based on commercial exchange and competition … the clients multiplied and therefore the distribution sites changed. …The musician no longer sold himself without reserve …he would sell his labor to a number of clients, who were rich enough to pay for the entertainment."[289] The new group of soca performers emerging in the late 20th and early 21st centuries base much of their success on making money through performing for paying audiences anywhere around the world. And since the audiences willing to pay more for performances are located in the Global North that is where the

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[288] Leu, "Raise Yuh Hand" 49.
[289] Attali, *Noise* 46-86 at 46-47.

soca performances occur. Because this new audience is often unused to the type of "dialogue" between singer and audience, the singer needs to change the lyrics of the songs to make it more easily understood to this new audience who is paying him/her to perform. Therefore, referencing insider knowledge is jettisoned in favour of songs with "universal" themes and straightforward messages.

Although soca initially focused on social commentary and other 'serious' topics, I believe that though the rhythms of 1990s soca mimicked that of soca of the 1970s, its lyrics were fashioned as the evolution of the "jumpy" calypso music, which seldom addressed political or social issues. Therefore, the performers needed a way to connect with their audience that was amenable to the faster pace of this new style, as well as preserving the call/response interaction calypsonians had with their audiences. In the 1990s, soca pioneers such as Super Blue coined iconic phrases like "wave your rag" and "jump and wave" to elicit a visible response from the audience. These instructional lyrics were exceedingly popular with Carnival revelers, the main attendees at Carnival music shows. Because singers were predominantly male, women in Carnival music occupied the position of background/backup singers and onstage dancers. Background vocalists sang accompaniment to the male lead, while onstage dancers performed the dances that the audience mimicked with the singer's invocation: jump and wave, wave your flag, do the Iwer, butterfly, move down de road, follow the leader, etc. Instruction from the male lead singer became the hallmark of soca music by the early 1990s.

Like instructional soca, smutty soca lyrics focused on getting the crowd to move, but not on political statements or social commentary. Initially much of the smutty soca represented women's bodies in a sexual light, with special emphasis on their posteriors

when engaging in a wining motion, moving the hips in a circular motion while leaving the rest of the body primarily still.[290] For Caribbean nationals, wining is just a dance performed in response to a song which may or may not indicate a sexual invitation to a partner. However, tourists from Eurocentric cultures always see it as an overtly sexual advance. As a result, colonial subjects from England and Europe accused black women who performed this dance of trying to entice men into bed. English, European and American tourists who visit the Caribbean and observe women wining still assume this is so. This wining phenomenon was so common that in "Bottom in de Road" Maude Dikobe comments that "[s]cores of carnival songs extol the joys of wining on women's big bottoms, and portray women's writhing, rotating bumsies as the most desirable sexual targets in a fête."[291] At the same time, heterosexual Caribbean men are afraid of these posteriors which serve as a symbol of female sexuality gone wild as is referenced in Kerwin DuBois' 2014 "Too Real" when he says "That bumpa is too real, it dangerous/I want to wine but it looking dangerous/I want to wine but it could mean danger/Gyal I just want to wine on you."[292] Essentially, smutty soca gave voice to the obliteration of overt sexual propriety that characterizes Caribbean societies outside of Carnival. Therefore, during Carnival, heterosexual women can initiate physical contact and even proposition heterosexual men with little societal censure.[293] Heterosexual men especially appreciate contact that involves wining, as this dance is done with the male's and female's pelvis

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[290] Wining is a common, and expected, dance engaged in by both male and female Caribbean people. It is such an important part of Caribbean society that Byron Lee's instruction on how to perform it, "Dollar Wine" (1991), is still quite popular.
[291] Dikobe, "Bottom in de Road" 2.
[292] Goddard-Scovel, Ekeama. "Too Real." Kerwin Du Bois. Transcribed 20 Feb. 2014.
[293] Usually there is little censure, but for the religious sections of the society who look down on Carnival and whose members do not engage in Carnival activities, including dancing.

resting on each other. More importantly, heterosexual women are expected to be experts at this dance, and a heterosexual man is seen as a worthy sexual partner if he can keep up with her wining. If he cannot, he is unworthy of her attention, sexual or otherwise.

The regarding of the black Caribbean woman's bottom as obscene and linked to supposed overt, untamed sexuality has a long history in Caribbean culture.[294] In European culture, and eventually also in Caribbean culture, the comparatively bigger posteriors of black women signs of impropriety as they could not be hidden or camouflaged under clothing and therefore drew the gaze of the white males. Often heterosexual white planters or overseers would state that black women used their bodies' "enhanced" charms to lure them into having sex. As a result, the black woman's posterior, especially when performing the common dance of wining, were lures for heterosexual males to engage in sex. This history has left Carnival parties and other kinds of parties as the only spaces where women, both heterosexual and non-heterosexual, can freely wine with minimal labeling of immodesty. This labeling is important as Caribbean women's respectability is inextricably tied with their bodies and the actions they perform with them.

Soca singers abounded throughout the Caribbean in the 1990s encouraging and enticing their audiences to have fun during Carnival by performing different dances to soca music. Singers did this by urging people to sing with them and follow their instructions. Although some soca definitely referenced women's bodies, especially in smutty songs,[295] the actions they invoked were generally not gender-specific and the

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[294] See: Kamala Kempadoo, *Sexing the Caribbean: Gender, Race, and Sexual Labour.* (New York: Routledge, 2004); Gregg, Introduction. *Caribbean Women* 1-67.

[295] See songs like "Balance Batty" by WCK (1995), "Dollar Wine" by Bryon Lee and the Dragonaires (1991), "Weakness for Sweetness" by Natalie Burke (1996), "I want To Wine on Something' by Mighty Swallow (1991), etc. Most of these songs can still be found on YouTube or using a simple Google search.

lyrics emphasized discarding conventional rule of any kind during Carnival by performing a physical action, thereby tapping into and controlling the pulsing physical energy of Carnival revelers. Some soca songs that were notable for their regional influence on the Carnival music industry's shift to instructional music are "Get Someting and Wave" by Super Blue (1991), "Bacchanal Time" (“De Party Cyan Done”) by Super Blue (1993), and "Follow the Leader" by Nigel and Martin (1991).

Instruction Soca Takeover

In the following section, some transcriptions were done by myself and others by random sites frequented by Caribbean viewers. Though the lyrics of newer soca songs are easily found online, the lyrics of older songs referenced here were often unavailable. While writing this section, some lyrics were available while others were not, therefore, I transcribed those which were not. The singers, some of whom now have websites, did not provide lyrics to the songs, probably because of the age of the songs. As a result, any mistakes in transcription for those done by this author are attributable to author error.

"Get Someting and Wave" by Super Blue (1991)
Transcription by Ekeama Goddard-Scovel

Verse 1

Break away, Carnival is plenty action (woy yo)

Break away, '91 is wheels in motion (woy yo)

Break away, time to see some bottom rolling (woy yo)

Break away, want to see me culture rising

I wanna scream

Everybody, break away (a a a huh!)

Chorus

Get someting and wave x 2

Get something and wave everybody

Get someting and wave

Woy yo (woy yo) woy yo yo (woy yo yo)

Woy yo yo we (woy yo yo we)

Woy yo yo, (woy yo yo)

Verse 2

Masqueraders getting horrors, tell dem (no curfew, no curfew)

Special welcome to foreigners (no curfew, no curfew)

De nation economy will build, lift de curfew and wait until,

Steelband and calypso echo through de land (woy yo yo yo)

'91 is to celebrate, peacefully without hate

Trinidad and Tobago I'm hearing ting-a-ling-a-ling-a-ling-a-ling

Me hear, me hear ting-a-ling-a-ling-a-ling-a-ling

Me hear, me hear ting-a-ling-a-ling-a-ling-a-ling

(Ting-a-ling-a-ling-a-ling-a-ling x3)

"Get Someting and Wave" by Super Blue is one of the songs responsible for calling some instructive soca songs "jump and wave" songs.[296] Whatever their opinion of most jump and wave songs, Carnival revelers acknowledge this song as the one that ushered in the jump and wave era of the 1990s. Those who dislike it, e.g. Gordon

[296] Super Blue is Austin Lyon's sobriquet.

Rohlehr, cite it as the beginning of a lyrical decline in "good soca," as there was little in the way of a social or political message and the simplicity of the lyrics ensured mindless repetition by an audience of usually drunken revelers. Rohlehr and others believe that "Get Something and Wave" began a break with the tradition exemplified by soca titans David Rudder and Lord Shorty I, who sang soca which "uplifted" the country or region.[297] Other critics point to the song's huge impact on lyrics in the most popular soca songs up through the 2000s, but see this positively because of soca's dramatic rise in popularity during and beyond Carnival season, as well as the increased attendance at parties that help artists raise funds before and after Carnival to generate more work for themselves outside of the calypso tent circuits.[298] I argue that this song began the very public split between what used to be called "jumpy" songs (songs which spoke *to* partiers and *about* partying) and those that were considered "real kaiso" (calypso music which spoke of *serious* topics such as national pride, politics, social ills, etc.). This split would later play out on the international stage, as soca eventually replaced calypso as the most popular Carnival music among Caribbean-identified Anglophones whose countries celebrated Carnival, both intra- and extra-regionally.

The catchy lyrics of this new soca embodies the instruction, as well as the intra-island thrust of Carnival music in the 1990s. The songs encourage revelers to "get something and wave." Revellers understand that the "something" is the flag of the revelers' island. This emblematic soca instructs its *entire* audience to get something and

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[297] See previous chapters on Rudder and Ras Shorty I's contribution to the creation of soca genre of Carnival music.

[298] Though there is no quantifiable data on the rise in popularity of soca sung at Carnival parties, many newspaper writers have anecdotally stated the increase in popularity by the increase in number of Carnival parties over a period of time.

wave, appealing not on gender but to national pride. The audience does not need to learn and practice a specific action, nor learn a male or female version of the dance (as is customary for most songs). Every member, young and old, of whatever gender, can participate in this soca and enjoy it.[299] Moreover, when performing this song Super Blue can use almost any kind of backup aid, as well as audience members, to enhance his performance. Soca artists often have backup dancers onstage to provide visual interest or interpret the soca being sung as, singing lyrics which command the audience to get something and wave requires little preparation on the part of the singer, which has the perk of lowering the cost of putting on the show.

"Get Someting and Wave" also highlights two ways activities which use women in the Carnival music industry, as well as the soca music industry: their role in the lyrics and in the onstage performance. Without specifically naming women, when Super Blue says "time to see some bottoms rolling" it is code for wanting to see women wining. Because wining utilizes posteriors, and women's posteriors are the focus of wining, audiences assume that women are the target for this kind of instruction. However, because the statement does not call specifically on any gender, it is open to men as well as women with no negative societal consequences. Moreover, this song is performed with a male lead (Super Blue) and female backup singers. In true traditional call and response Carnival music, the lead sings a line (the call) and the backup singers provide the echo (the response). Soca is generally performed by one singer, therefore the backup female singers voices play supporting roles. This routine also cues the audience in to their role is

[299] Soca performers and writers usually assume that Carnival revelers are abled-bodied, so many of the songs take physical mobility as a given.

in the song: supporting the lead singer. This is such a normal part of soca that it is common for the audience response to drown out that of the backup singers, an action which augers well for the "crucial to the success of the new song."[300] The greater the audience response, the more revelers will attend the next fête featuring that particular singer.

"Bacchanal Time" ("De Party Cyan Done") by Super Blue (1993)
Transcription by Islandlyrics.com

Chorus

The party cyah done, the party cyah done

Children tambulea,[301] flambo,[302] shack shack and drum

The party cyah done, the party cyah done

Tell them, start the mas,[303] the moko jumbie[304] go come

The party cyah done, the party cyah done

1 2 3, start the ceremony (Repeat complete chorus)

Interlude

Everybody!

Start to wave x 4

Today is Carnival children

Everybody!

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[300] See: Leu, "Raise Yuh Hand" 49.
[301] This is a form of "tamboo," See Winer, *Dictionary* "tamboo," a bamboo percussion instument. In Jamaican English, "tambu" is a drum. See *Dictionary of Jamaican English,* ed F. G. Cassidy and R. B. Le Page, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 437.
[302] Winer, *Dictionary* "flambeau," a torch or flare to privide illumination (351).
[303] Winer, *Dictionary* "mas,' meanunf 2: "event or situation which is wild, uncontrolled … bacchanal" (580).
[304] Winer, *Dictionary* "moko jumbie", "a costumed player on very high stilts" who "walks and performs a jig-like dance" (603).

Start to wave x 4

One the count of four x 4

Leh we go

1 2 3 4

Jump up, jump up, jump up, jump up x2

Bacchanal Bacchanal x 2

Jump up, jump up, jump up, jump up x 2

Bacchanal Bacchanal x 2

Sunday [Is Bacchanal]

Monday [Is Bacchanal]

Tuesday [Is Bacchanal]

Wednesday [Is Bacchanal]

Thursday [Is Bacchanal]

Friday [Is Bacchanal]

Saturday [Is Bacchanal]

Everybody everyday [Is bacchanal]

Express yuhself, wine

Express yuhself, grind

Express yuhself, make love

Express yuhself, make love

"Bacchanal Time" represents the other half of Super Blue's dual impact on Trinidadian Carnival, as well as the Carnivals of smaller Anglophone islands. This song encapsulates one of the most important parts of the Carnival season for revelers and soca performers: partying. Super Blue sings of the revelry inherent in Carnival parties and the insatiable need for partying that the attendees exhibit when they refuse to leave the party, saying that "the party *cyah* done" (the party cannot end). Here Super Blue uses instructive lyrics to get his audience to "start to wave" their flag: a continuation of his song from two years before. This invocation calls on Carnival revelers to perform a simple action that signals their participation in the Carnival "ceremony." But in "Bacchanal Time," the emphasis shifts from waving as a show of national pride to waving as a show of religiousness, with Carnival as a ceremony. Again audiences need not preparation for this action whose goal is for the audience to *show* participation in Carnival during the performance or on the night of soca finals so the judges can see that Super Blue meets the criteria for "moving the crowd." By performing this action, the audience gains a sense of community and shared pride. At no point in this song does the action implicitly or explicitly apply specifically to women or men.

In addition to the instructive lyrics, Super Blue mingles religious iconography with smutty lyrics, deepening the sense of inversion that other scholars have claimed permeates Carnival. His lyrics implicitly transpose the icons, actions and dances of Trinidadian Carnival into those of a religious ceremony, thereby embracing the inverted world view that bacchanal represents. At the same time that Super Blue revels in the chaos of the Carnival party, he calls on the historical Carnival icons of the "tambulea, flambo, shack shack and drum" to encourage his audience to see them as ceremonial

idols, figures highly prized by the Carnival congregation. This sets him up as the priest/witch doctor who commands everyone to "Express yuhself [and …] wine […], grind […and ….]make love," instructions not commonly associated with a religious mass. In keeping with the ideal of bacchanalia, and the irreverent activities associated with Carnival, Super Blue uses smutty lyrics to encourage his audience to dance in a way that would lead to having sex.

Following his smutty instructions, the audience should first "wine," which involves rotation and gyration of one's pelvis (alone or often against another person's), then 'grind' which involves wining more intensely and with greater friction against another's pelvic region (back or front), an act which could stimulate the persons involved to perform his final instruction, "make love." Here neither women nor their body-parts are singled out through covert or overt lyrics, as would occur in later songs. Rather, the lyrics invite "anyone" to dance together and culminate their enjoyment with an expression of true 'love': sex. The dances are not specific to women and definitely do not highlight women's posteriors, breasts, or lips as will become popular in the early 21st century. But it is also implicit that this intercourse would occur between heterosexuals for, as a country where Christianity is one of the major religions, the assumption of who is involved in sexual intercourse is staunchly heteronormative. And the listening audience, also from Trinidad or from other islands where the primary faiths are Christian, knows this and acts accordingly.

More importantly, "Bacchanal Time" shows the lyrical repercussions of accommodating inter-island performances to non-Trinidadian audiences. The imperatives of performing for multiple Caribbean audiences become evident in the instruction to

"start to wave." "Bacchanal Time's" popularity throughout the Caribbean speaks to the change in production due to different contexts of music performance, exemplifying Attali's period of representing, as indicated earlier. During the 1990s, soca performers branched out from their own countries to perform at Carnivals on other Caribbean islands. In order to be relevant to these broader audiences, and gain economic capital from performing regionally, their multiple audiences/nationalities had to be able to easily interpret their instructions. "Bacchanal Time," and songs like it, spurred national pride, but also brought local Caribbean people into the market of symbols of national pride and unity—even as these were invoked by someone from another country. As long as the audience had the money to purchase their own country's flag, they could feel part of a national as well as Caribbean unity.

"Follow the Leader" by Nigel and Martin (1991)
Transcription by Ekeama Goddard-Scovel

Chorus

Follow the leader, leader, leader

Follow the leader

Follow the leader, leader, leader

Follow the leader

Follow the leader, leader, leader

Follow the leader

Verse 1

Hands up, down

Up, down, up, down

Up, down, up, down

Everybody now, put one hand in the air

And we going from left to right

Concurrent to Super Blue's foray into instructive and smutty soca was the popularity of Nigel and Martin's highly instructive soca "Follow the Leader." If Super Blue was the inspiration for the jump and wave movement, with a hint of national pride, Nigel and Martin's soca exemplifies the critiques of many self-avowed calypso purists that soca is mindless and "messageless." "Follow the Leader" does exactly what the title says: it instructs the audience to repeat the actions of the "leader" (the soca performers). Nigel and Martin mimic call/response in their instructive format so that the audience performs a series of actions: "hands up, down," put "one hand in the air" and move that hand from "left to right," among other things. In so doing, they closely adhere to Leu's definition of instructive soca. The execution of these actions is quite simple for many Caribbean Carnival revelers, as these are actions common to Caribbean classrooms, from pre-school to secondary school. This song showcased Caribbean unity in a nonsensical way that appealed to many Carnival revelers, a brand of soca that would later have its own "followers."

Both Super Blue's and Nigel and Martin's songs are instructive, but Super Blue tells a narrative and needs dancers, while Nigel and Martin string action words together and need no backup dancers. Because of their different content, the songs evoke differing reactions from the audiences but are both still extraordinarily popular. Both performing groups command their audiences to perform actions and use an augmented call/response format to show that the audience is physically participating in the song, whether at a party

or at soca competitions. Both also instruct the audience to use their hands. However, while Super Blue creates stories about Carnival and icons, calling on nationalism and inverting/perverting religiousness, Nigel and Martin's lyrics jump from one action to another with no narrative cohesion. In so doing, Nigel and Martin make their song eminently marketable to broader Caribbean audiences. While there is a place for women as backup singers in Super Blue's songs, Nigel and Martin need no backup singers, as common educational experience of their audiences mean that no teaching of actions is necessary. This means that Super Blue's performances are more expensive because of hiring dancers while Nigel and Martin's are cheaper, because they can hire fewer dancers or none at all. The differences in these two performers' songs indicate different forms of soca and how these forms impact the cost of the performances.

Throughout the 1990s, it is notable that most instructive and smutty soca songs sought to get the entire audience to join in the Carnival "spirit." The two songs that epitomized this movement emphasized national, regional and even religious sentiment, while other songs such as "Follow the Leader" commanded the audience to follow instructions using common social experiences. The actions named were executable by both men and women, and many other soca performers have been eager to follow these singers as evinced by the songs' enduring popularity. Lyrically, women were implicitly and explicitly present, and were also included in the mass activity. Onstage, women often made up the backup singers and dancers, performing actions to the songs so the audience could imitate those motions, as well as serving as pretty 'decorations.' The impact of instructive and smutty lyrics on soca music was immense, and continued to grow into the

21st century. However, along the way, the target of the instruction shifted from a general audience to a primarily female audience.

The impact of globalization on the preponderance of instructional and smutty soca lyrics was noted by Kezia Page "'Everybody Do de Dance': The Politics of Uniformity in Dancehall and Calypso." She suggests that the focus on instructional and smutty calypso/soca lyrics may represent an effort to make these songs "appear less political, less localized, and as music more concerned with reaching a global audience through dance"[305] She uses one calypso and one dancehall song to explain how these genres "capture an ethos that is at once concerned with making space for the outsider and marginalizing the same outsider … in their invitation to uniformity."[306] Though I agree with her arguments, in the global context of the 21st century, I wonder, what happens to the music when the 'outsider' is a diasporic outsider?

SOCA INSTRUCTION OF THE 21ST CENTURY: SMUTTY INSTRUCTION

Smutty Soca Instruction of the 21st Century

Soca's immersion into the global music market has wrought major changes in its lyrical content. Because it emerged from calypso, late 20th century soca used themes common to calypso and a lyrical style that mimicked it. However, by the early 21st century, popular soca themes primarily referenced women's bodies and abandoned the intricate double entendre lyrics of the previous era to embrace a more unvarnished way of presenting and representing the Caribbean female and her anatomy. Leaving behind

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[305] Kezia Page "'Everybody Do de Dance': The Politics of Uniformity in Dancehall and Calypso," *Music, Memory, Resistance,* ed. Paquet et al. (2007), 307-22 at 310.
[306] Page "'Everybody Do de Dance'," 310.

general entreaties to the audience to perform different dances, it is now women in the audience who soca artists command to "wuk up" their posteriors "bumpa to bumpa" to show their female "Caribbeanness" to 'the world.'[307] In this new lyrical world the lack of overt references to male audience members is notable — this new soca is all about the woman "performing" her femininity in public.[308] The male's space lies outside the lyrical entreaties, where he judges how well the woman can demonstrate her femininity by revealing her wining skills. Essentially, the demonstration of femininity through public performance emphasizes three pertinent points: (1) the role of performance and performativity in 21st century soca, (2) the lure of such performances as a way of including the Caribbean diaspora, and (3) the overarching history of global consumption of Caribbean goods and services over the past 400 years.

Soca had always prioritized the performance of specific actions as a sign of audience participation in Carnival revelry, but early 21st century soca further codified the shift that began in the 1990s from a general audience to performers themselves. This change ushered in a need for self-conscious performance as well as performativity. While late 20th century soca deemphasized the role of performances taking place onstage because the audience performed the dances, 21st century soca is concerned about what happens onstage. The audience witnesses a show whose spectacle they can marvel at: female bodies display/perform luscious versions of 'real' Caribbean femaleness. The female dancers coordinate their movements with the instructive lyrics of the songs which explicitly indicate that women should perform the dances, not men. The soca artist then

[307] The quoted words and phrases are parts of different soca songs in the last 15 years.
[308] Many soca songs now tell women to 'perform.' Some songs which use this term are: "Monster Wine" by Lil' Rick (2013), "Bend Over" by Machel Montano (2011) and "Too Real" by Kerwin Du Bois (2014).

literally has the dancers take center stage, while she/he instructs them, leaving audience members spellbound at the spectacle. It is common for artists to call on eager women from the audience to "show what you can do" or to "represent" their island and "prove" how much of Caribbean woman they are. Caribbean women *have* to be good at the dance moves as a matter of pride as their proficiency at these dances shows how "Caribbean" they are. The dance moves often involve dancers trying to outdo each other while the audience looks on as the (usually) male soca singer instructs them as to what kind of wine they should perform and rates them with the audience's help. Most of the dance moves performed by female performers rely on basic wining and include the six-thirty, tick-tock, hunch twunch and precision wine. In both cases, the dancers, as well as the volunteers, are conscious of performing for the viewing pleasure of an explicitly male gaze.

By performing dances overtly coded as feminine/female, they engage in performativity. Judith Butler, in her influential work, *Gender Trouble*, defines performativity as "a repetition and a ritual which achieves its effects through its naturalization in the context of a body, understood in part, as a culturally sustained temporal duration."[309] Performativity has become the locus around which 21st-century soca spins**,** revealing the gendered dynamics of soca music. Soca lyrics directly tell Caribbean women, with repeated emphasis and visual performances, that their role in Carnival music is to use what their 'great-grandmother pass[ed] …down"[310] for the rating and approval of an assumed male audience. The preponderance of lyrics instructing only

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[309] Butler, *Gender Trouble* xv.

[310] These lyrics are from Alison Hinds' 2013 Crop Over hit 'Born with It' in answer to 'how your bumpa get so broad," which is a part of the song. This shows that female soca performers seemingly embrace this assumption that Caribbean women have large bottoms that are genetic and that the women need to 'wuk it" for men to notice.

women to perform particular dances, as well as the proliferation of concert videos showing Caribbean women fulfilling their culturally accepted role of wining, reveals how naturalized this expectation of Caribbean women reveling in the using their big “bumpas” is. While in the Caribbean wining is primarily embraced in closed environments, those who consume soca and attend shows abroad view this as a tenet of being a Caribbean woman. This is particularly true in the Caribbean diaspora, whose populations view Carnival as their primary connection to their Caribbean ‘roots.'

In the early 21st century, soca's entrance into the global economy relates directly to its marketing in the Caribbean diaspora. The relatively small economy of the Caribbean region makes it more or less impossible to make a living as a Carnival musician, making it more lucrative to perform in areas of Europe and North America with large numbers of Caribbean identified people who celebrated Carnival. Caribbean Carnival celebrations are located in big cities such as Miami, New York, Cincinnati, Montreal, Toronto, Notting Hill, etc. Large segments of these audiences consist of both “native” and pure tourists sharing the same spaces. The audiences commonly consist of Caribbean identified people (Caribbean citizens, diasporic Caribbean people), as well as those who have developed an appreciation for soca music but who may not be directly related to Caribbean citizens. Marketing that targets these consumers consequently needs to mimic impressions of the Caribbean gleaned second-hand from relatives. These ideas rely on beliefs of Caribbeanness in urban centers of the Global North informed by historical ideas of the Caribbean, interwoven with communal experiences of interacting with diasporic Caribbean people. Making Caribbean music accessible and culturally easy to consume is thus key to its success with these audiences.

The long tradition of the idea of the Caribbean makes Carnival music easier for foreign consumption. In *Consuming the Caribbean*, Mimi Sheller explains that "[i]t could be argued that there is no 'primal nature' in the Caribbean both because so much of it has been constructed by human intervention and because every aspect of it is dosed with a heavy infusion of symbolic meanings and cultural allusions."[311] While soca lyrics and performers construct a primal image for an audience hungry for a Caribbean identity, Sheller points to the constructedness of a Caribbean historical imaginary. She explains that assumptions, expectations, and conclusions informed by writers from different cultures possessing different cultural associations heavily influenced this history. As a result, the marketed ideals of what a real Caribbean woman is and does, is not a comprehensive concept of the Caribbean woman, but a revisiting of a well-known image based on inaccurate historical information, as well as one based on actions performed over the Carnival weekend and 'jump-up' days of Carnival Monday and Tuesday, not what is expected the rest of the year.

Catering to this diasporic audience by relying on historical inaccuracies that the audience accepts as true means that the images of Carnival and Caribbean women in soca videos reflect and even constitute the image that Caribbean diasporics have of their own history. Soca performers play into Eurocentric views of Caribbean people in general, and specifically the ideas of Caribbean women as aggressive, over-sexualized beings whose sexuality is defined by one part of their anatomy: their posteriors. In her introduction to *Caribbean Women,* Veronica Marie Gregg traces the historical description of black

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[311] Sheller, *Consuming the Caribbean* 36.

Caribbean women in primary documents, prior to the period under study here, to provide a basis for the persistent ideas of Caribbean women which still exist today. She remarks that, "there is the idea of the West Indian Negro woman (the term is used deliberately) that is central to the various discourses through which the Caribbean itself and Caribbean identities are construed."[312] So too it is that discourses on music and Caribbeanness in the 21st century bring up discussions of Caribbean women. She later explains that attributes of Caribbean woman are ones commonly ascribed to Negro women, all negatively positioned against the white imaginary woman. In a fledgling industry which aims to eventually reach an imagined richer, white consumer, it is easy to fall into common accepted tropes of Caribbean women which many Caribbean societies have accepted as true to some extent, and replicate this in marketing aimed outside of the Caribbean. This marketing strategy resonates with a variety of historical constructions of the black female body, but especially with ideas about women from 'hotter climes' being sexually promiscuous.

While late 20th-century soca wanted to the entire audience, by the early 21st century soca's lyrics and dances almost exclusively center on women and their anatomy. Many songs speak directly to women and name them as their object, calling on them to "gimme one more wine"[313] or "shake up your bum bum"[314] or wooing them with "you make me feel like I'm in a Red Light District."[315] Stage performances of the songs feature dancers in lingerie-like attire, or ask women in the audience to come on stage and

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[312] Gregg, Introduction, *Caribbean Women* 3.
[313] Montano, Machel. "One More Wine." Online Video. islandlyrics. 3 Jun. 2011. Web. 21 Jul. 2012.
[314] Riddimcracker Chunes. "Timaya - BumBum." Online Video. YouTube. 4 Oct. 2013. 10 Dec. 2013.
[315] Soca Music. "Bunji Garlin - Red Light District 'Soca 2014' HD." Online Video. YouTube. 8 Nov. 2013 Web. 13 Dec. 2013.

perform their own spectacle as part of the dance. The man's role is to stand and judge, admire, deride, encourage or show pride that 'his' woman can 'represent.'

In the Caribbean, women's bodies have historically been central to major economic processes that have enriched the crown and, later, the independent state. As the generator of new slaves in the form of birthing, the black woman's body was at the center of producing new workers for the plantation system during slavery in the Caribbean. Additionally, women's bodies worked the fields alongside their male counterparts, in addition to cultivating home 'gardens' to provide food for their families, making it possible for themselves and other slaves to work on the plantations, with planters contributing little food for the slaves working in their fields. In a similar way, throughout early 21st century soca, the centrality of women's bodies to the economic success of these small island economies is markedly visible in the lyrics of the international soca songs.[316]

Objectification of Women in Soca

"One More Wine" by Machel Montano
Transcription from: lyrics2007.com

Verse 1

All she say she wanted, was one wine from me

All she said she needed, was a little bit of my time

She never expected to get so addicted to my wine

She said, are you gonna hurt me? Am I a statistic?

A victim of your circumstances, or will I just [get] evicted

[316] Much of this section is a reworking of a section on Montano's "One More Wine" from my Master's Thesis "Women and Soca" (2009).

From this loving safety, please don't disappoint me

Not this time

Chorus

Gimme one more wine (one more wine)

One more time (one more time)

Gimme one more wine (one more wine)

One last time (one last time)

Ah said, oh oh oh oye, oh oh oh oh

Ah said, oh oh oh oye, oh oh oh oh

Ah said, oh oh oh oh oh oye, oh oh oh oh

One more time, this wine

Montano's soca "One More Time" exemplifies the 21st-century production style that equips a song with a softly-sung instruction telling — *inviting* — its assumed heterosexual female audience to "Gimme one more wine." Montano's lyrics tell of a heterosexual relationship which is easily relatable to both Caribbean and non-Caribbean audiences. The speaker is a man, who explains that the relationship is initiated by a woman who wanted "one wine" and "a little bit of [his] time." The term "wine" carries a double meaning here: It can mean the dance move or the act of sex. But the fact that she "never expected to get so addicted" to his wine reveals an initially casual relationship. Wine also cues the listener in the Caribbean or diaspora *how* to dance to the song, making it both a smutty and instructive soca. The relationship becomes more constrained when the woman asks, "are you gonna hurt me? Am I a statistic?" These lines clearly show that soca's lyrics are as nuanced as a calypso, which uses double entendre to make its points.

"Hurt" could reference physical pain through dancing roughly or during sex, and also the potential emotional suffering from a bad relationship. Questioning whether she will be a statistic references the score-keeping of sexual partners that heterosexual males engage in. The female here shows concern for being considered a statistic, someone who is 'just a number' and this reveals the power dynamic at play in heterosexual relationships, where the male holds the social power to brand the woman as "easy" or to claim her as worthy of long term relationship/wife material.

This soca song reveals the power Caribbean males wield in heterosexual relationships. Montano employs the common trope of Carnival music in which a male guilelessly enters into a casual heterosexual relationship where the woman wants a more stable relationship, a relationship in which the male retains social power. He states that the woman clearly wants more time with him but does not want to be "a victim of [his] circumstances" (which listeners know nothing about). Nor does she want to get "evicted," thrust away from him, pushed out of his bed, or kicked out of his house. The last two lines of this verse are equally ambiguous, with "wine" as the dance motion or metaphor for the sex/relationship. The "safety" that she does not want to lose could refer to his arms, his heart, or his house. During the jump-up session during Carnival, a male dancing with a female should protect her from the collateral pushes and shoves of the crowd, and from the other males who may want to dance with her against her wishes. Thus, dancing with the male of her choice could represent "safety" for the woman at Carnival. However, "safety" can also refer to the security a woman feels in bed with a man who is sure of his sexual prowess, and/or the comfort of being in a committed relationship. The plea to "please don't disappoint [her] / Not this time" implies that he holds significant power

over what happens in here as the woman has been hurt in relationships before, either by him or other men, and she is wary of being hurt again in any context.

Implicit in this verse is the underlying view that males hold much physical and social power in comparison to women's wining power. Montano tells the listener that the woman is practically pleading for one opportunity to have sex/wine/a relationship with him. And it is assumed that when they finally have sex, she will become "addicted to [his] wine." These lines serve as a boost to heterosexual male virility as the implication is that his performance will be so stellar that she now cannot do without *his* sex, and by extension without him. When she asks whether he is "gonna hurt" her or if she is "a statistic," she is clearly aware of the man's socially sanctioned propensity to have sex with many women but hopes that she will be the one who will get him to change. Ultimately, her pleading shows that she is subservient to him and that he is always in control: whether in a sexual relationship or when dancing.

Here it is a little unclear who is begging to "Gimme one more wine," but it would seem that it is the woman doing the beseeching, thus placing her in a subordinate position. Throughout the chorus, she begs the man to "Gimme one more wine (one more wine)" and his response is neither encouraging nor discouraging as he says "oh oh oh oye, oh oh oh oh." This non-response mimics the general attitude of heterosexual males toward committed relationships, which involves being non-committal. As a result, the woman always appears as trying to use her feminine wiles to push him to commit to a long term relationship. Essentially, his response means that if the woman is good enough (i.e. up to his standards), he will acquiesce. Augmenting the lyrics is the dancing that accompanies the use of the term "wine": Montano's "gimme one more wine" also

compels the audience to follow his instruction to wine. Performances of this soca often show how instructive the lyrics are, as the audience always responds to Montano's directive.

Although using more double-entendre than Super Blue's "Get Something and Wave" and "Bacchanal Time," Machel Montano's "One More Wine" is a softer version of instructive soca, encouraging a pointedly female audience to wine for a male gaze. At the same time that this fictitious woman is objectified, she is also presented as the stereotype of the Caribbean woman (and by extension, man)[317] that has prevailed since the start of the Black Atlantic slave trade: black Caribbean women who are at once sexually aggressive (i.e., wining) and submissive to the prowess of the black Caribbean man. By drawing on these entrenched references as a marketing ploy, Montano ensures that his diasporic audience feels a sense of connection with their past (as told to them by relatives) and can relate these actions to Eurocentric views of Caribbean women and men. The diasporic audience thus sees the Caribbean woman's role as performing wining for the heterosexual man, whose prized feat is dancing or sexual prowess. Therefore, to be a 'true' Caribbean female or male, the effective performance of the wine (preferably at a Montano concert) engenders a shallow, facile sense of "One Caribbeanness."[318]

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[317] Gregg states that though "[s]cholars have demonstrated how crucial a role gender, especially women, played in the construction and articulation of the report . . . [and she agrees] that women were central, but not as people. The [Moyne] commission's report [1945] focused to an astounding degree on the sexual activity of Negroes. Under the claims of eyewitness accounts rooted in historical analysis, it concluded that the social and economic problems of the West Indies, even during the Depression and post-Depression eras were rooted in a surfeit of sexuality and licentiousness on the part of blacks" (54). See Introduction, *Caribbean Women*. For a more in-depth discussion of Caribbean masculinity, see: Reddock, ed. *Interrogating Caribbean Masculinities.*

[318] One Caribbean is the title of regional governmental efforts started in 1997 to create a one market economy comprising Anglophone Caribbean islands.

"Red Light District" by Bunji Garlin (2013)
Transcription by Ekeama Goddard-Scovel

Verse 1

Ha, Well every man like a woman with skills

Take yuh cheque, big money and change them to singular bills

And when she talk to you with those hips

She make you wanna tip, tip, tip, tip, lawd is like a woman that strip, ha

When soca play and dem gyal shake dey bumpa

Every man say dey activate de lumber

Nuff man go sneak out, some try to reach out

Come backstage to get de phone number, rrrr

This gyal too sweet, she just too damn sweet

Jungle fever & suburban meet

Ah feel like I on Bourbon Street

She make me ball

Chorus

Aye feel like I'm in a red light district

Aye feel like I'm in a red light district

Aye ah when she flip and den she buss de split

Aye feel like I'm in a red light district

In one of 2013's most popular soca songs, women again serve as the central focus of the song's instruction. Crooning slowly, Bunji Garlin at once addresses a presumed heterosexual male audience while objectifying the female body in such a way that it

sounds pleasing, in tone, to a female audience. Positioning himself as "every man," Garlin praises the woman's "skills" as evidenced by her ability to make men take "big money and change them to singular bills [. . .] when she talk to you with those hips." He intimates that the highest honour he can pay a woman who has wining 'skills' is to tell her that she makes him want to treat her like a stripper. And although he notes that soca music is what "turns her on," he divorces soca from its usual context of partying and parading and locates it in a strip club, thereby changing the focus from the public spectacle of Carnival to the more private spectacle of a woman "performing" for a man to gain monetary compensation. Garlin speaks of the paid performance of a woman moving her hips (wining) for money, and drives his point home when he states approvingly that he "feel[s] like [he's] in a red light district" when he sees this woman. By placing the wining woman in a strip club, Garlin highlights the tension that appears any time a Caribbean woman (or man) wines in the presence of a person from a European or North American culture — a dance move in the Caribbean context is unfailingly read by outsiders as enticement to engage in sexual intercourse.

This emphasis on women's bodies and the "tending more and more towards a very direct sexual discourse," as Leu points out,[319] instead of using double-entendres reveals how the musical context changes the message of the music, including its audience. Attali also asserts that "when the locus of music changed, when people begin to listen to it in silence and exchange it for money …There then emerges a battle for the purchase and sale of power, *a political economy* [emphasis in original]."[320] Attali explains that the

[319] Leu, "Raise Yuh Hand" 49.
[320] Attali, *Noise* 25-26.

context and audience surrounding the production of music changes the music itself. Specifically, he ties music's commodification into a monetized system, to a change in power dynamic between the consumer/audience and the musician/performer. Essentially, in ascertaining the marketability of the product/music to the new consumer/audience, the musician/performer needs to make the product palatable to the new consumer/audience, thereby making substantive messaging changes to the original product. This is evidenced by the change of focus in lyrics between late 20th century songs that are barely a decade apart. Soca moved from a non-gendered local gaze to a gendered global/Eurocentic gaze on women performing common Caribbean dances: Garlin places his objectification of wining women within an economic exchange space where diasporic Caribbean people and true tourists are familiar, a strip club. As soca music engages more global audiences, women's bodies serve as a currency/vehicle through which the performers engage this new market. Soca producers' assumptions about how best to change their product for a new and broader audience fundamentally changes the music, a shift most immediately noticeable in the lyrics.

This new diasporic audience, while following the instructions of the soca performer, can revel in performing 'lewd' acts while feeling a facile sense of connection to their "history." To this audience the cost of the party/concert ticket, appropriate attire, flag/rag, Carnival band package and exercise regimen to fit into the parade costume are all worth it to feel this sense of participation in their own Caribbean traditions. With all the enticements to perform Caribbeanness, it is easy to lose sight of the fact that soca performers are selling a vision and image that caters to what it thinks its audience wants. But geographic Caribbean people can listen to a soca song or watch its video and tell

whether the target audience is local or foreign. Often what separates the two is that the locally targeted soca tends to have more intricate and crafty lyrics while the foreign-targeted soca tends toward a simpler and more unvarnished lyrical style. However, the lines between these two are becoming increasingly blurred as travel between the Caribbean and other metropolitan areas becomes more common, exposing Caribbean people to an intimate view of their own culture from abroad and fueling expectations and assumptions about the music marketability of contemporary soca.

The instructive soca songs of the 21st century have placed women at the center of this new industry by constructing songs around women's actions and body parts. From being the focus of lyrics that ask them to perform "one more wine" or create the feeling of being "in a red light district," women's place in instructive soca is analogous to that of prostitutes, with their sensual performances central to the product. While women are by no means the only topic soca performers sing about, it has become an expectation each Carnival season that the most popular songs will somehow address women, usually instructing women to perform different kinds of wining. As a still-nascent genre, I believe it is necessary to trace what has informed this shift from instructing both sexes to a near-total focus of instructions targeting only women.

SHIFTING TO DIRECT SEXUAL DISCOURSE

Soca's overt sexual Discourse

This shift "towards a very direct sexual discourse"[321] has a variety of intersecting causes. However, due to the constraints of this chapter, I will speak directly to two of the

[321] See: Leu, "Raise Yuh Hand" 49.

main ones: a history of interaction with lucrative forms of dance music like dancehall, hip-hop and reggaetón, and a new audience base facilitated by changing local and global economic changes. As Attali notes, when the social and political conditions that give rise to a particular music genre changes, the music itself undergoes major changes. Competition for a share of the profits in the global music marketplace pressure soca performers to incorporate a very blunt style of discussing women's bodies into their music, ostensibly in order to make it more marketable to a diasporic Caribbean (and true tourist) audience that possesses few tools to decode the usually more lyrically nuanced calypso. Hence, under the guise of "partying," the lyrics of soca slide into smutty or sexually instructive lyrics that require male audience members to watch as women, both on stage and in the audience, perform dance motions coded as risqué and openly overt invitations to by many Eurocentric societies, but which is *labelled* as "representing" a very narrow version of Caribbeanness.

Because of the small size of the Caribbean region and the history of slavery in which slaves were often exchanged between islands, it is common for music and musicians to travel between islands. As a result, much Caribbean music is influenced—even co-opted—by other styles and genres. And soca is no exception. Directly a progeny of calypso, soca has also 'borrowed' from musics of other islands. In "Calypso and Caribbean Identity" Gordon Rohlehr examines the effect of globalization on calypso/soca lyrics that speak specifically to the "theme of Caribbean unity." In so doing, he unknowingly links the shift to instructive and smutty soca lyrics in the 1990s with the emergence of Jamaican calypso singing group Byron Lee and the Dragonaires, who

performed both in Trinidad and Jamaica from the 1960s through the 1990s. Rohlehr claims that:

> There are many action songs in which the singer is telling the listeners, the party goers, what they should do. This may have started with the Jamaican bandleader, Byron Lee, and his band, the Dragonaires. I can remember as early as the 1960s in Jamaica that Lee's band created songs telling people to 'put your had in the air' and 'Put your foot and jump higher, higher, higher,' and so on. Indeed, Byron Lee has been attending Trinidad Carnival for at least twenty years. He popularized calypso music in Jamaica and he moves between Jamaica and Trinidad.
>
> In that form of music, the singer is in control. The singer has a certain degree of power in the sense that she has the mike in front of her. In addition, the lead singer and the band also demonstrate increasing control over the medium as a result of the electronic nature of the music. A lot of the music has become what one may call 'mechanized joy.' ….You also have the music taking a lyrical form where men suggest that they are in control of women. A lot of those lyrical commands consist of men telling women what to do with different parts of their anatomy, and the women often seem to comply. Since the late Lord Kitchener noted some years ago that the 'bum bum' was the sugary part of the female anatomy, almost every calypsonian seems to have followed his lead. There

> is hardly a calypso no without some reference to 'bum bum.' It is very repetitive, but it has become very popular.[322]

In his discussion of influences on soca, Rohlehr makes some valid observations about the characteristics of soca in comparison to Jamaican calypso from the Byron Lee and the Dragonaires' genre. Byron Lee and the Dragonaires' music was considered party music before the advent of soca music, and many of their songs shared common characteristics with what is now called soca. Rohlehr correctly identifies as similarities the emphasis on audience participation through singer instruction and the power inherent in a performer who controls an audience's actions. Although calypso definitely impacted soca, Rohlehr's convenient whitewashing of soca's first two decades and the impact of common "jumpy calypsos" on it leads me to question some of his conclusions. Moreover, by using the pronoun 'she' when initially discussing the power of the person holding the microphone, he seems to be pointing to women as the ones welding power over the audience, while not acknowledging that more men sing soca. In the context of his negative attitude to soca, it is interesting that he makes this move here. But then he switches back to "he" when explaining that male soca performers can be seen as controlling females in the audience. Female performers also "control" females in the audience, so it would make sense that he should continue using "she," but he switches to "he." Rohlehr's unusual vacillation between "she" and "he" in this section points to the difficulty that even some scholars have in acknowledging the socially less powerful position that Caribbean woman often occupy. In vacillating here, he ascribes power to

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[322] Gordon Rohlehr. "Calypso and Caribbean Identity," *Caribbean Cultural Identities,* ed. Glyne Griffith, Bucknell Review 44 (Lewisburg, Pa: Bucknell University Press, 2001), 55-72 at 69

women in one moment, then takes it away in another, instead of fleshing out the context of how power works for these two genders onstage or in the audience.

In “Calypso and Caribbean Identity,” Rohlehr *does* correctly pinpoint soca's major departure from calypso as the increase in control over the medium, and thus over the audience. In referencing the electronic instruments and software that characterize today’s soca recordings, Rohlehr identifies this “mechanized joy” as central to the change in soca, an assertion that is wholly correct. The soca singer trains the audience to respond to mechanized music and singer instructions, not necessarily the quality of the singer’s musical skill. However, although Rohlehr writes of “that form of music,” in the beginning of this quote, it is unclear which kind of music he is referencing. He seems to be making a distinction between the lyrical composition of calypso sung by Trinidadians and calypso sung by Jamaicans such as Byron Lee and The Dragonaires. But he may also be speaking only of soca, which arguably developed alongside the kind of calypso that Byron Lee and the Dragonaires sang in the 1960s and ’70s. While ostensibly comparing the two musical forms, Rohlehr conflates the characteristics of other Jamaican musical genres. I assume he speaks primarily of reggae and its permutations, as both reggae and dancehall make extensive use of electronic equipment and sound effects, use repetition of words, name the song’s musical genre and, focus on the female anatomy in party music.

Like reggae and dancehall, soca definitely objectifies parts of the female anatomy as a common theme. However, the manner in which women's anatomies are invoked has undergone a major shift between late 20th century soca and that of the early 21st century. In Rholehr's discussion of Lord Kitchener's “Sugar Bum Bum” (sweet posterior), he correctly points out that soca at this point was “taking a lyrical form where men *suggest*

[my emphasis] that they are in control of women." A close inspection of the lyrics shows that Kitchener is actually not overtly 'telling women what to do with different parts of their anatomy." Iinstead, he is very cleverly expressing how her actions make him feel. He narrates a song about how a woman named Audrey makes him feel because she has a 'sugar bum bum.' While not telling Audrey to wine, or put your foot in the air, Kitchener song slyly suggests that women should want this reaction from him, and by extension most other men. This angle is markedly different from Byron Lee and The Dragonaires' instructions and also from soca songs of the 21st century as Kitchener subtly used knowledge of social mores to coax the audience to do what he wanted. Bryon Lee and the Dragonaires and the soca of the 21st century, meanwhile, demanded it of their audiences, expecting it to be done. Soca lyrics have jettisoned this notion of using subtle social norms and instead baldly tell women what to do with their bodies. As with previous examples in this chapter, the lyrics here serve as a barometer of acceptable gendered relationships between Caribbean males and females.

In the 1990s, the number of women entering the calypso field forced male performers to become conscious of the ways in which they spoke of women in their songs. Since many calypsonians, especially the younger ones, were also soca performers, some of this linguistic shift also migrated to soca. In the case of "Sugar Bum Bum," although the audience could decode that Kitchener's 'suggestion' was directed to women, by not overtly identifying who was supposed to perform this dance, female listeners or performers could not accuse Kitchener of chauvinism. Additionally, the ambiguous construction of the lyrics allowed males to also perform these actions with no social penalty. This earlier method of soca instruction was not as overtly gender specific as it

did not single out women for instruction as would happen in the beginning of the 21st century**.**

Shifts in both the local and global political climate at the site of production and the target audience are important to the trajectory of soca music. The comparative youth of the singers' countries of origin cannot be overlooked in explaining why songs that highlight national unity and religious pride became so popular. During the 1970s and '80s, soca was designed to appeal primarily to the people of one island: Trinidad. By the 1990s, soca artists were travelling to other newly independent island-states in the region that were still grappling with issues of unity, self-governance, and generally the after-effects of centuries of colonization. As a result, songs with a good dance beat that vaguely reflected national or even religious pride became instant hits; so too were songs which tapped in to the euphoria of being free to organize Carnival without colonial oversight.

As Trinidadians moved from intra-island to inter-island performances, their lyrics reflected the political will to foster Caribbean unity. While the politicians worked to develop one currency, one high court, and ease of travel between islands, soca artists sought to profit off of the goodwill underlying Caribbean unity and aided in popularizing the view of Carnival and Carnival music as a true cultural symbol of the Caribbean's ownership of cultural product not indebted to the European powers.[323] Super Blue and

[323] Pearse, in his earlier cited article, explained that "police intervention on Canboulay night brought to a head several different types of existing hostility to the administration, causing new social groups to identify themselves nominally 'the People' and the people's festival, so that carnival began to be a symbol for a national sentiment shared by a broad section of the community, and in opposition to the administration … Carnival has since moved forward to its present position as the most important and characteristic national festival of Trinidad" ("Carnival in the Nineteenth Century Trinidad," 193). This idea of Carnival and Carnival music being 'we ting' was popularized primarily by Trinidadian performers when they travelled to

Nigel and Martin are examples of artists who coded lyrics that could be sung on any island and was guaranteed to get a positive crowd response. The hook-line “Get Something and Wave” was sung and heard all over an Anglophone island chain still giddy from the independence boom of the 1960s and ’70s. Commanding the audience to 'follow the leader' is also popular as its repetitiousness ensures no audience member is unaware of what their response should be. Throughout the 1990s soca artists following in the Trinidadians' footsteps did the same, with the end product being the start of an entertainment industry that employed formerly seasonal singers in a job where they could island-hop from one Carnival to the next, practically year-round. This economic cycle could continue so long as the audience was financially capable of supporting foreign artists.

With the end of many tax breaks for foreign companies and the diminishing banana industry, the disposable income necessary for native Caribbean people to attend Carnival and other functions dried up. The inter-island network which enabled many soca performers to make a living by island-hopping from one Carnival to another disappeared. So another audience who had an intrinsic appreciation for—and interest in—Carnival became necessary: enter the Caribbean diaspora. Gaining entrance to other Caribbean Carnivals outside of the region then became the target. Much of this legwork was done by calypsonians such as Sparrow, who performed in European and other metropolitan enclaves outside of the Caribbean throughout the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s.[324] By the late

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different regional islands and was used to foster Caribbean unity. This assertion accounts for the common belief that calypso, in the image of Trinidadian calypso, followed a similar trajectory as it did in Trinidad, where its genesis was resistance to colonial rule.

[324] Dr. Slinger Francisco whose sobriquet is Sparrow (previously The Mighty Sparrow) is the most well-known calypsonian and is has been officially crowned ‘The Calypso King of the World.’ He sings a

20th century, few calypsonians could follow in Sparrow's wake but many aspired to do so, in order to have a more stable life where they were professional performers instead of seasonal ones. The Carnival circuit for the top soca performers, therefore, shifted from the Caribbean region to more Eurocentric locations. London, Florida, New York and Toronto were major targets, as each city had large populations of Caribbean-identified people. This redirection heralded a major shift in soca lyrics and performances.

CONCLUSION

A change in the site and process of production led to a major shift in the soca music audience. In these new spaces, soca performers shared stages with performers of different genres of music and also had to grapple with a new diasporic audience that was at once Caribbean and not. From dancehall performers to hip-hop singers and producers to reggaetón performers, soca performers occupied stages where they were often in the minority and always assumed to perform in a manner acceptable to this new audience. This continued to expose soca performers, as Rohlehr points out, to even more musical genres, which in turn impacted the lyrical choices made in order to remain relevant and competitive.[325] With blatantly sexist lyrics and performances of other singing groups and the acceptance of these performances by the diasporic audiences, soca performers began to portray the same themes and images in their lyrics and performances as these other artists. Essentially, when soca performers met the wider singing market, they followed

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mixture of calypso and soca and has performed to a vast number of Diasporic Caribbean people in a number of countries around the world for over 40 years.

[325] Rachel Buff, "Community, Culture, and the Caribbean Diaspora Caribbean New York: Black Immigrants and the Politics of Race by Philip Kasinitz," *American Quarterly*. 46.4 (1994): 612-20.

the accepted trend. And the most obvious way they followed this trend was to embrace the objectification of the female body in lyrical form.

In so doing, the soca performers now re-inscribe Euro-centric views of Caribbean/black women as wanton to an audience at once Caribbean identified but also tourist in many ways. Much of the Caribbean diaspora has been apart from their Caribbean roots for two or more generations and look to the Carnivals celebrated in their country as a source of historical connection to their past. Many have not visited the Caribbean with any frequency throughout their lives, if ever. Therefore, the lyrics and images that accompany these musical forms are taken as authentic to the Caribbean and not the produced, marketed products that they are. The instructions to women to do the 'six-thirty' and to 'push back' promote the image of Caribbean women as objects which will perform on command, especially if the instruction is to perform actions that are coded as sexual invitations in many of the countries of residence of the Caribbean Diaspora. Moreover, it is implicit from the soca songs that to be a 'true' Caribbean woman, the diasporic Caribbean woman need only pay to attend a Machel Montano concert, buy a flag/rag and, finally, perform her Caribbeanness at the instruction of the performer, while in the presence of like-minded individuals. In essence, just as women's bodies were harnessed for the colonial venture in terms of birthing new slaves, as well as working alongside the men, so too are women's bodies harnessed as the focus of the lyrics of soca, as well as being used as onstage spectacles to lure more people to buy tickets for the next concert. Women and their bodies are at the heart of the product that is the cornerstone of the newest Caribbean industry: soca music.

CONCLUSION: "WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE, SOMEBODY TELL ME" [326]

At its inception, the Caribbean island nation of St. Lucia was steeped in the precursors to neoliberalist thought, its political leaders thinking of independence not as a breaking away and standing on one's own, but a negotiation of some freedoms while keeping channels open for the sake of retention of jobs and business with foreign companies. Essentially, St. Lucian leaders wanted political independence – territorial sovereignty – but continued economic dependence on England and other Western European nations.[327] This tract was similar to the neocolonial track which other former colonies took in the aftermath of 20th -century decolonization. The political elite in St. Lucia maintained the idea of attracting foreign investment to create jobs, but it was really the private owners of big businesses of the island who profited from this arrangement, by maintaining their profitable associations with multinational companies like Geest.[328] As a

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[326] See the song of the same title by calypsonian Gypsy in 1985.

[327] Tennyson Joseph focuses on the "myth' vs the reality of 'limited sovereignty." He argues that "the process of globalization calls for a re-examination of the assumptions of sovereign statehood in light of its impact on the pursuit of sovereignty and national self-determination" (*Decolonization in St. Lucia* 3). He further posits that the grounds for St. Lucia's 'independence' came out of neoliberalist policies which strongly impacted what options St. Lucian politicians saw as viable postures for achieving independence in relation to the outside world. The result being that, though St. Lucian politicians wanted to follow in Trinidad's footsteps, they saw it as impossible because many local leaders, politicians, businessmen and labour leaders were in disagreement as to whether St. Lucia was indeed able to 'stand on its own' in the global community.

[328] In the late 1950s, St. Lucia's biggest agricultural owners (Harold Devaux, Denis Barnard and others) abruptly changed the main crop of St. Lucia from sugar cane to bananas because of investment from Geest, a British horticultural company. By the 1960's St. Lucians were all on board for 'green gold," as the commerce in bananas were called. This was one of the moves they said would ensure St. Lucians always had jobs, even while it kept wages abysmal. See: Joseph, *Decolonization in St. Lucia* 42-48.

result of this strongly held belief, the island's leaders have always positioned themselves, and by extension the country, to ascertain regional or global trends and 'strongly encourage' the populace and its industries to follow trends that would ensure monetary rewards and approval from the former mother countries. To these ends, St. Lucia appropriated much from sources beyond the island, including musical genres such as country and western, calypso, soca, dancehall, reggae, rap and gospel. This dissertation has focused primarily on calypso's progeny, soca, as this dance/party music has become synonymous with the Caribbean.[329]

Calypso's introduction into St. Lucian society served multiple purposes, such as entertainment for tourists and an indicator of being on trend with Trinidad, unity with other Associated States. Calypso also served as a symbol of nationhood after independence, which revealed a kinship with the neoliberal tenet that institutions be nimble and shift with regional and global market trends. St. Lucia first appropriated Trinidadian calypso, in an effort to provide American and European tourists with the kind of music they expected based on their experiences in Trinidad. Calypso, introduced to the broader St. Lucian public via the local beauty pageant, the Carnival Queen Show, debuted as a side act in the context of established musical acts. This exposure eventually led to a higher profile for calypso, especially during the phase of colonial rule called Associated Statehood. Calypso then became one of the vehicles though which St. Lucia could claim unity with larger Anglophone Caribbean islands also seeking independence.

[329] Apart from dancehall which is the signature party music style of Jamaica, and reggaeton which is the signature party music style from Spanish speaking islands like Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic, soca is synonymous with the Anglophone Caribbean.

By the time St. Lucia gained its independence, the political establishment had instituted calypso as part of its new culture and part of what made St. Lucia a Caribbean island.

St. Lucian calypsonians closely followed Trinidad's lead through most of the 1980s and 1990s by performing throughout the Caribbean islands and then, in the early 21st Century, performing globally. But this seeming 'progress' did not occur without friction between calypso's proponents and the broader St. Lucian society. Prior to the 1980s, the acceptance of calypso was restricted to the Castries downtown area. Calypso's acceptance by the St. Lucian populace beyond Castries is an uphill battle, still raging today, which pits rich against poor, English speaker against French Kwéyòl speaker, city against country and finally, male against female. ~~So,~~ while those in Castries sought to become part of the broader global music industry for financial and prestige reasons, as well as Caribbean unity and branding purposes, the rest of St. Lucia saw calypso as a foreign import that had little to offer. In order to gain relevance in Europe and the U.S., St. Lucians in Castries adopted Trinidadian calypso and relegated their own indigenous music to St. Lucia's historical and cultural past by labelling it 'folk' music.

This prioritization of foreign over local also meant the importation of social customs from Trinidad. This created a situation in which a country of primarily poor, Kwéyòl-speaking country folk, who were relatively egalitarian in terms of heterosexual relationships, were asked to represent the interests of middle-class, English speaking city folk whose musical style was patriarchal in nature - all in an effort to create a more globally marketable product. Economic and political leaders such as Prime Minister Honorable Sir John Compton and plantations owners Denis Barnard and Harold Devaux thus continued the colonial model, with one slight change, they were in charge of the

island's policies. This neocolonial system created during colonialism, dictated that people of the former colonies continue following trends outside of the island, often dictated by the mother countries' businesses, to ensure that there is always a product with a readymade market to be sold to.

More pointedly, while digital recording, file sharing, etc. have revolutionized access, the spread of Caribbean-identified populations across the globe has scattered, redefined, and expanded soca's audience. Together these contingencies have transformed not only how the music is made (and thus how it sounds), but also how and to whom it signifies. In the late 20th and early 21st centuries, with the advent of the internet granting access to different forms of advertising[330] and cheaper musical technologies[331], soca music across the Caribbean is undergoing drastic changes. This technology permeates all musical genres, aided by growing ease of travel to diasporic audiences in the Global North. As a result, the consumption and production of soca is changing in tandem. The music industry and individual artists use current technologies to create new sounds for musical genres, from calypso and soca, to dancehall and lover's rock, to hip-hop/rap and R&B, in order to produce new records and videos, and disseminate them on a global level. Soca's audience has expanded exponentially, due to the Caribbean diaspora's interest in music from "home." Performers have answered this demand by producing more content and uploading it on popular sites such as YouTube.com and Trinijunglejuice.com, and on individual performer's sites. However, the new

[330] Personal websites, social media sites, file sharing sites, etc.
[331] Sampling software, music sequencing software, midi controllers, etc.

technologies serve to highlight old criticisms of Carnival musics that remain problematic, as well as creating newer problems.

Throughout this dissertation, I explored how female Caribbean soca artistes have lyrically responded within a field of patriarchal and neoliberalist ideas. Female calypsonians have opposed entrenched calypsonian images and tropes of promiscuous, scheming and avaricious women with narratives of unromantic, fickle men and absentee fathers. Female soca singers, concerned with being marketable on a global level, have responded to soca's emphasis on women's sexuality and bodies in a different way from the female calypsonians. On one hand, they have upheld male notions of women's sexual empowerment that simultaneously support woman power while objectifying women, while subtly critiquing ways in which female power is labelled immoral and evil. The backdrop to these responses is a world where the interpretation of the black Caribbean female body is always that of the Other. The lyrical negotiation of soca performers thus exemplifies local and global responses to different views of black women from the Global South.

At the end of this dissertation, I recognize the need to expand the discussion of Caribbean Carnival musics beyond its global and transnational expansion, its counterculture status and its new musical sounds. These issues make hegemonic assumptions about the history, role and trajectory of Carnival and its musics, with little analysis of the larger global, political and historical structures that impact its creation and reception. My research shows that Caribbean scholars have much work to do in terms of: (1) documenting individual island's Carnival and music histories; (2) cataloguing musical recordings with their production information (singer, producer, song writer, etc.) and

lyrics in a repository accessible to Caribbean scholars and the broader public; (3) providing physical facilities to house this information; and (4) creating a curriculum that incorporates these findings into classrooms at all levels. Our histories, so often written from a distance by those lacking cultural knowledge and local contacts, are often incomplete. Taking these steps will help complete the picture of Caribbean Carnival and its musics for future generations.

Documenting each island's Carnival history is important to reveal both their diversity and interdependence. When any Caribbean or Caribbean identified person speaks of Carnival's history, it is that of Trinidad. It is only in researching for this project that I, whose father was a songwriter for calypsonians, realized that calypso in St. Lucia was not an anti-colonial act but entertainment for tourists, and eschewed French Kwéyòl speakers in lieu of British English speakers. This research helped explain why people from the outer districts ignored calypso, turning to other forms of music such as zouk, country and western, etc. Chronicling other islands' histories may yield similar insights, helping to explain each island's particular version of Carnival and calypso.

Cataloguing Carnival songs in easily accessible areas and formats are also necessary to instil pride in one's country. Another difficult aspect of my research has been the lack of actual recordings of pre-1985 St. St. Lucian calypso. After much inquiry, I found the songs were available at St. Lucia Radio Station, but 30 years' worth of them were available only on reels, which had to be converted to mp3s with only one working reel-to-mp3 convertor available. In the meantime, the reels languished in a rodent-infested room, physically inaccessible to the broader public, as well as technologically inaccessible. Finally, cataloguing songs with the necessary song information in mp3,

FLAC or other widely-used formats and storing them in an appropriate area, such as the National Archives, would greatly stimulate interest in local musical history. Such a project enacted in other islands could eventually create a network of Carnival musics, which can then be cross-referenced to create a fuller picture of Carnival musics.

Furthermore, recovering the history of people involved in Caribbean Carnival and Carnival musics, such as band leaders, costume designers, singers, arrangers and songwriters is necessary for a sense of community. Throughout this research I have encountered a glaring lack of even cursory information about people intimately involved in all aspects of Carnival, even in primary source material. One example is the omission of Miss Uralis Bouty, and other founding members who literally funded the first 15 years of carnival, from any newspaper article on Carnival or the Queen Show. She had to write herself into Carnival's history in the 1970s to be recognized as an integral part of its development in St. Lucia. Had she not written a two-page spread about her role in the organization of Carnival in the 1940s, her input would have been forgotten. Such issues required me to use spotty information from crumbling newspapers, as well as interactions with current people in the field when I could find them. A concerted effort to keep track of this information would help identify and praise individuals who have participated in different aspects of Carnival. It is therefore imperative that we gather as much information on these people as possible.

Finally, incorporating these findings into classrooms at all levels would disseminate this information to Caribbean citizens. Often in St. Lucia we still harbour the idea that we have no history, and that often has to do with generations being taught histories written by non-Caribbean people, who record portions of our history that they

deem worthy of note. This is usually information on how timid the Arawaks were in comparison to the fierce Caribs, and how well or badly we as a race worked for the colonial project. As a result, Caribbean people and culture are seldom the depicted in a nuanced form. By incorporating information about our countries into our education, we would show that we prize our histories as highly as we prize the Eurocentric curricula we have taught for centuries.

By working on these tasks, I hope we, as Caribbean people, will jettison the assumption that our cultures have nothing of intrinsic import. And for a region where music is the way of life, what better way to start than with a musical cultural artefact?

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White Zombie, Directed by Victor Halperin. (Halperin Productions and RKO Radio Studios, 1932).

Wilson, Peter J. *Crab Antics: A Caribbean Study of the Conflict between Reputation and Respectability*. Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press Inc., 1995. Print.

VITA

VITA

Ekeama Goddard-Scovel

Education:

Ph.D.
Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN
Graduation: Summer 2016 (expected)
Status: Defense scheduled May 2016
Dissertation: *Functions of Gender in Soca: An Historical and Lyrical Analysis of St. Lucian Soca*

Soca's music history negatively impacts female soca artists, especially when confronted with each island's differing Carnival music history. Contrary to popular assumptions, soca (as well as calypso) did not develop similarly in every Caribbean island. Soca actually exemplifies a pan-Caribbean phenomenon that is regionally, as well as gender specific. St. Lucia illustrates this phenomenon as it has a markedly different calypso history from Trinidad, which is called the land of calypso and now, also the land of soca. I use St. Lucia as a departure point from which to dismantle the overarching Trinidadian narrative that many, including St. Lucians, have co-opted in an effort to foster Caribbean unity, as well as global brand recognition. Specifically, I explore the intersections of soca, women, and neoliberalism through an historical analysis of St. Lucian Carnival music history and songs of three female soca artists. Performing this kind of analysis is especially relevant in a global moment where Trinidad-style Carnival, musicians, and Carnival products are available in most large metropolitan cities. And, although the field of Carnival musics is filled with discussions on calypso and women in calypso, few scholars, outside of Canadian Jocelyne Guilbault, explore the intersections of soca, women, and neoliberalism. This silence of a scholarly group known for vibrant discussions and analysis of Caribbean life is palpable. Into this silence, I voice an intersectional conversation on soca, a genre that is rapidly becoming the sound and image of what 'being Caribbean' means, even as those images play into problematic stereotypes of the Black Caribbean female that traces its roots to our colonial past.

Certificate for Women's Gender and Sexuality Studies
Women's Gender and Sexuality Program
Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN
Spring 2014

Master of Arts
Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN
Graduation: December 2008
Thesis: *Women, Soca and Globalization*

This master's thesis argues that, far from being lyrically poor, soca music's focus on heterosexual relationships and more mundane social concerns constitutes a response to global trends fostered by a neoliberal globalized world. In this world, Caribbean performers from the Global South seek to establish a space on the 'world stage' with an artform whose roots are chaotic as well as patriarchal in nature. In so doing, they encourage an emphasis on frivolity, while simultaneously locating women at the center of soca music: from women as subjects of the songs, to women singing those songs, and finally, to encouraging women to publicly embrace their sexuality.

Bachelors of English, Minor in Journalism
Cameron University, Lawton, OK
Graduation: May 2005

Certificate in Teacher Education (Literacy Studies)
From University of the West Indies
Department of Continuing Studies
Sir Arthur Lewis Community College
The Morne, Castries, St. Lucia, West Indies
Graduation: May 2001

Associate's Degree in Teacher Education and Educational Administration
From University of the West Indies
Sir Arthur Lewis Community College
The Morne, Castries, St. Lucia, West Indies
Graduation: May 1996

Conferences:

"What Images Do Diasporic West Indians See as 'Authentic' Caribbean Women? What Is the Source of This Information?" presented at South Atlantic Modern Language Association, Atlanta, GA. 8-10 Nov., 2013.

"Three Generations of Sexual Agency in Toni Morrison's *Sula*" presented at National Council for Black Studies, Cincinnati, OH. 16-19 Mar., 2011.

"Caribbean Musics' Videos: Soca and the Globalization of Carnival" presented at Louisville Conference on Literature & Culture, University of Louisville, KY. 18-20 Feb., 2010.

"In the Land of the Giants: Colonialism, Globalization and Neoliberalism in 21st Century Soca Music" presented at the 24th Annual Symposium on African American Culture and Philosophy, Purdue University, IN. 5-8 Nov., 2008.

"Magical Realism in Erna Brodber's *Louisiana*" presented at M/MLA Cleveland, OH. 8-11 Nov., 2007.

Teaching Experience:

Purdue

Graduate Lecturer Women's Gender and Sexuality Studies August 2013 – Spring 2015
Assistant Graduate Lecturer in Fall 2013 in a pilot of a lecture hall style of class. Taught smaller discussion groups after major lecture. Instructor of record from Spring 2014 to Spring 2015 of one class per semester, and participated in program activities. E.g. Take Back the Night, International Women's Day Celebrations, welcoming of guest speakers, etc.

Graduate Lecturer English Department ***August 2006 – Spring 2013***
Instructor of record for one basic composition class per semester. Duties included choosing texts for class, creating syllabus and assignments, teaching class and meeting for individual and small group conferences, grading all assignments and uploading student grades.

K-12

Get Set Inc. ***October 2005 – June 2006***
Kindergarten Teacher
Duties included teaching both toddlers and Kindergarteners with foci on social skill and academic development; including table manners, socialization and basic concepts of Math, English Language and Literature, Social Studies and Science. Emphasis also on utilizing gross and small motor movements and socializing in small and large group settings.

Castries Anglican Infant School ***September 1996 – 2002***
Class Teacher (K-G2)
Taught K and G1 classes. Duties included preparing and executing lessons for all academic and non-academic subjects (Math, English, Science, Arts and Craft, Physical Education), creating test items per subject, supervising students throughout school day, encouraging positive social behaviour, and building rapport with parents.

Gros-Islet Infant School ***September 1992 – July 1994***
Class Teacher (G2)
Taught G1 classes. Duties included preparing and executing lessons for all academic and non-academic subjects (Math, English, Science, Arts and Craft, Physical Education), creating test items per subject, supervising students throughout school day, encouraging positive social behaviour, and building rapport with parents.

Community and Professional Engagement:

Purdue

Caribbean Students Association ***Fall 2007 – 2016***
Member

Carnival Musics of the Caribbean ***Fall 2014***
Presented on Trinidadian carnival music in the context of the Caribbean to a group of American students about to visit Trinidad and Tobago to participate in calypso and soca workshops.

President of Purdue's Graduate Employee's Organization (GEO) ***2011-2013***
Organized meetings and oversaw group website.

Graduate Employee's Organization ***Fall 2007 – Fall 2011***
Member

Composition Program Team Leader ***2008***
Presided over UR@ Syllabus Approach meetings prior to school openings where Teaching Assistants and Lectures exchanged information about textbooks to use and activities planned for that semester.

Assistant Editor at Sycamore Review ***August 2006 – Spring 2008***
Assisted with sorting short stories to be used in the journal *Sycamore Review*.

M/MLA Moderator ***2007***
Introduced panelists, facilitated questions from audience and ensured panelists were comfortable.

Cameron University

President of Students of the Caribbean Alliance (SOCA) ***2004-2005***
Presided over meetings, instituted organization audit and facilitated fun group activities. Also organized mini-Caribbean Carnival in the Fall and Caribbean play in the Spring.

The Cameron Collegian ***Spring 2004 – May 2005***
Student Writer

Center for Writers ***Spring 2004 – May 2005***
Student Tutor

Cameron University Open Doors Program ***Fall 2003 – Spring 2004***
Tutor

Students of the Caribbean Alliance ***Fall 2002 – Spring 2004***
President and Vice-President

International Students Club ***Fall 2002 – Spring 2004***
Member

K-12

Ministry of Education ***June 2004 – August 2004***
Assistant Secretary

School Sports Official ***1998-2001***
Fulfilled role as an official for St. Lucia's Secondary school's basketball program, for which release from regular teaching activities was approved by St. Lucia's Ministry of Education and Sports. Officiated 2-4 games per day during tournament, and filled in statistics sheets for one team per game.

Kindergarten Grade Leader ***1999-2000***
Liaised between Kindergarten teachers and principal. Oversaw weekly Kindergarten planning meetings and collected scheme books for perusal and approval of principal. Identified teachers to create comprehensive tests per academic field for end of term exams and ensured standardization of test items before submission to principal.

Fundraising Committee Leader ***1997-1999***
Co-ordinated fund raising activities for Castries Anglican Infant School. Primary activities included organizing weekly ice-cream sales and annual Harvest Fair in conjunction with the Anglican Church in Castries.

House Leader ***1997-1998***
Castries Anglican Infant School divided students into 4 houses for sports competitions. Served as the leader of Green House whose role was to organize inter-house competitions to identify students to represent house in school sports, organize for students' tee-shirts for event, organize transportation and parental escorts to and from Mindoo Phillip Park, and ensure students are at relevant gates in time for sporting events.

Research Interests:

Feminism/s
Gender performance in the Caribbean
Intersectionality
Gender issues

Postcolonialism
Caribbean Diaspora
Transnationality
Historical documentation of music

Cultural Studies
Caribbean movies
Caribbean dance music

Coursework:

World Literatures and Women's Gender and Sexuality Studies
Caribbean Fiction
German African Literature
African American Women Writers
Caribbean Women Writers
Contemporary Black Feminist Literature
First Nations Fiction
Postmodern Blackness
Feminist Theory and Methods

Postcolonial Literatures
Postcolonial and Postglobal Studies
Subaltern/Postcolonial
Postcolonial Studies
Postcolonial/Postglobal Latin America
Theory and Popular Culture

General Literature
Introduction to English Studies
Middle English Language
Victorian Literature
John Donne
Medieval Outlaws
Rise of the Novel

Grants:

Purdue Research Fund ***Summer 2012***

Awards and Honors:

Sigma Tau Delta Honor Society ***Fall 2003 – Spring 2004***
Jesse Mae Hynes Award ***Spring 2004***
Lawton Shakespeare Award ***Fall 2003***